IS BEEF EATING PRESCRIBED IN THE BṚHADĀRAṆYAKA UPANIṢAD ?

Notorious importance has been attached to Raja Rajendralala Mitra's 'Beef in Ancient India', published as a booklet by Manisha Granthalaya (Private) Ltd., Calcutta. On pages ii & iii of its 'Preface' a passage from the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (6th Chapter, 4th Brāhmana, 18th kaṇḍikā), has been cited and interpreted as the 'eating of beef-preparation by a couple desirous of begetting a son learned in all the Vedas'. This verse is invariably quoted by almost all who support beef-eating in the Vedas. Shri Panduranga Vaman Kane, M.A., LL.M., Advocate, High Court, Bombay, has also referred to it in Chapter XXII 'Bhojana—flesh-eating' of his 'History of Dharmaśāstra', Vol. II, Part II, published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona. Later scholars like Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Honorary Head of the Department of History, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, in the chapter 'Food and Drink', ('History and Culture of the Indian People', chapter XXI, page 577) have relied on Kane's History of Dharmaśāstra for supporting the contention of beef-eating. Shri A. B. Shah, Professor of Mathematics and Statistics at the Universities of Poona and Bombay for about 20 years, now Director of Programme in India for the Congress for Cultural Freedom, author of 'Scientific Method & Planning for Democracy' and other essays, in the 'Introduction' to his book 'Cow Slaughter—Horns of a Dilemma', has emphatically supported beef-eating on the basis of the same controversial verse of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. This article intends to discuss this oft-cited verse. It reads as follows :

अथ य इच्छेत् पुत्रो मे पण्डितो विगीतः समितिंगमः शुश्रूषितां वाचं भाषिता जायेत सर्वान् वेदाननुब्रुवीत सर्वमायुरियादिति मांसौदनं पाचयित्वा सर्पिष्मन्तमश्नीयातामीश्वरौ जनयितवा औक्षेण वार्षभेण वा ॥

(बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् ६.४.१८)

In the 'Preface' of the 'Beef in Ancient India', this verse has been translated into English as follows :—

"And if a man wishes that a learned son should be born to him, famous, a public man, a popular speaker, that he should know all the Vedas and that he should live to his full age, then after having prepared boiled rice with meat and butter, he and his wife should both eat, being fit to have offspring. The meat should be of a fullgrown or of an old bull."

Mr. Robert Earnest Hume, Ph.D., D. Theol., Professor of the History of Religions at the Union Theological Seminary, New York, has translated this verse in different words but the idea is the same, except that in place of 'full grown or old bull' he has interpreted the meat as 'either veal or beef'.

The controversial words are interpreted by the two authors as follows :—

	Rajendralala Mitra	*Robert Earnest Hume*
Māṁsaudanam	boiled rice and meat	boiled rice and meat
Aukṣena	meat of a fullgrown bull	veal
Arṣabhena	meat of an old bull	beef

In English usage 'veal' is the flesh of a calf and beef that of a grown-up animal.

If it be accepted that rice with veal, meat of a full-grown or an old bull, cooked in butter, would beget a son, blessed with the learning of all the Vedas, then the Western people, who are almost all beef-eaters, should have all acquired this learning. Let us examine the interpretation of this verse in its appropriate context. The four verses immediately preceding the said controversial verse in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad read as follows :—

स य इच्छेत् पुत्रो मे शुक्लो जायेत वेदमनुब्रुवीत सर्वमायुरियादिति क्षीरौदनं पाचयित्वा सर्पिष्मन्तमश्नीयातामीश्वरौ जनयितवै ॥१४॥

अथ य इच्छेत् पुत्रो मे कपिलः पिङ्गलो जायेत द्वौ वेदावनुब्रुवीत
सर्वमायुरियादिति दध्योदनं पाचयित्वा सर्पिष्मन्तमश्नीयातामीश्वरौ
जनयितवै ॥१५॥
अथ य इच्छेत् पुत्रो मे श्यामो लोहिताक्षो जायेत त्रीन् वेदाननुब्रुवीत
सर्वमायुरियादित्युदौदनं पाचयित्वा सर्पिष्मन्तमश्नीयातामीश्वरौ
जनयितवै ॥१६॥
अथ य इच्छेद् दुहिता मे पण्डिता जायेत सर्वमायुरियादिति
तिलौदनं पाचयित्वा सर्पिष्मन्तमश्नीयातामीश्वरौ जनयितवै ॥१७॥

These four verses, according to all the translators, give dietary prescriptions for begetting progeny which is well versed in one or more Vedas as follows :—

for a son, proficient in one Veda, diet of rice cooked in milk, and mixed with ghee ;

for a son, proficient in two Vedas, diet of rice cooked with curd, mixed with ghee ;

for a son, proficient in three Vedas, diet of rice cooked in water, mixed with ghee ; and

for a learned daughter, diet of rice cooked in *til* (sesamum), mixed with ghee.

According to Western scholars, the chronological order of the four Vedas is as follows :—

(i) Ṛg-Veda ; (ii) Yajur-Veda ; (iii) Sāma-Veda ; and (iv) Atharva-Veda.

If the sequence of the Vedas in the above-quoted verses of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad is taken to correspond to the order in which the respective Vedas have appeared, then the diet prescribed for a couple to acquire a son well versed in one or more of the Vedas will be as follows :—

(i) For Ṛg-Veda, diet of rice and milk, mixed with ghee ;

(ii) For Ṛg. and Yajur-Vedas } " " curd, " "

(iii) For Ṛg, Yajur & Sāma Vedas } diet of rice and water, mixed with ghee ;

(iv) For Ṛg, Yajur, Sāma & Atharva Vedas } diet of rice and beef, mixed with ghee

If the above interpretation is accepted, beef diet has been enjoined for the acquisition of the knowledge of the Atharva-Veda only.

The above verses do not indicate a diet of the meat of smaller animals like goat, sheep or others for acquiring a child proficient in one or two or three of the Vedas. Then how can it be justified that beef diet has been prescribed for begetting a son learned in the four Vedas, particularly for the Atharva Veda. Let us consider the question further and in greater details.

Just as the English word 'flesh', besides meaning 'muscular tissues of an animal', also means 'soft pulpy part of fruits and vegetables' and 'meat', besides meaning 'flesh of an animal', also means 'anything eaten as food for nourishment', the Sanskrit word *Māṁsa* also means 'soft pulpy part of fruits and vegetables, etc.' The readers can consult any Sanskrit dictionary. Similarly, the peel of a fruit is called skin ; its hard part is called bone and fibres are called ligament or nerves etc.

'PRASTHAM KUMĀRIKĀ-MĀṀSAM ĀNAYA' in Sanskrit could mean 'bring a seer of girl's flesh', but it means only 'bring a seer of the fleshy pith of the medicinal plant called *kumāri* (Hindi—ghikvār).

There are several words in Sanskrit which mean a particular animal or which refer to parts of their body, but primarily they are the names of medicinal plants.

Go-danti cow's-teeth : a kind of medicinal plant ; yellow orpiment (Monier-Williams) ; a white mineral substance (Monier-Williams)

Go-kṣura cow's hoof : a medicine called *gokhuru* ; *Tribulus lanuginosus, suśruta* (Monier-Williams).

Go-jihvā — cow's tongue; Ayurvedic medicine called *gajwan* or *gojwan* (its leaf is rough like cow's tongue); name of a plant *Phlomis* or *Premna esculenta* (Monier-Williams).

Ajā karṇa — goat's ear; *asana arjuna* (आसन अर्जुन) tree whose parts are used in the preparation of medicine; the tree *Terminalia Alata Tomentosa* (Monier-Williams).

Ajā — she-goat; plant whose bulb resembles the udder of a goat (Monier-Williams)

It would be blasphemy if one interprets these words only as parts of the body of a cow or goat or the animal itself.

The chapter VI-4 of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad deals with the subject of begetting learned progeny according to one's own desire. The very first verse of this chapter is :—

एषां वै भूतानां पृथिवी रसः, पृथिव्या आपोऽपामोषधयः, ओषधीनां पुष्पाणि, पुष्पाणां फलानि, फलानां पुरुषः, पुरुषस्य रेतः ॥१॥

which means—

"Verily, of all created things here, earth is the essence;
of earth, water is the essence;
of water, medicinal plants are the essence;
of medicinal plants, flowers are the essence;
of flowers, fruits are the essence;
of fruits, man is the essence;
of man, semen is the essence.

In this chain from earth to semen (seed of the human species), no mention has been made of anything connected with animal flesh. The specification of the plant kingdom clearly indicates that high class semen needed to beget high class progeny, can be produced by fruits of medicinal plants only and not from any kind of animal flesh.

The word '*aukṣeṇa*' is from '*Ukṣa*'. It will be relevant here to quote the various meanings of this word from the famous Sanskrit-English Dictionary compiled by Monier-Williams. They are as follows :—

(i) a bull (as impregnating the flock);
(ii) name of '*soma*' (as sprinkling or scattering small drops);
(iii) one of the eight chief medicaments (*ṛṣabha*).

The word '*ārṣabheṇa*' is derived from the word '*ṛṣabha*'. The said Dictionary renders this word as follows :—

(i) a bull (as impregnating the flock);
(ii) a kind of medicinal plant (Suśruta, Bhāva-Prakāśa);
(iii) *Carpopogon Pruriens* (Caraka).

The well-known Sanskrit-German Dictionary under the title *Sanskrit-Wœrterbuch* published by the Imperial Academy of Sciences, St-Petersburg in 1855, explains the word '*ukṣā*' as dripping or trickling *soma*. The Dictionary has cited the word from various mantras 1.135.9, 9.83.2, 9.85.10, 9.86.43, 9.89.2, 9.95.4 of the Ṛg-Veda.

A few more meanings are ascribed to these two words, but they are not relevant here.

'*SOMA*' in Monier Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary is 'Juice of *soma* plant' where *soma* plant itself is said to be a climbing plant *Sarcostema Viminalis* or *Asclepias Acida*; a drug of supposed magical property. '*Soma*' is interpreted as 'nectar' as well. Almost similar interpretations of the *soma* plant are given in other indigenous dictionaries also.

The concluding words of the above verse are '*aukṣeṇa vā ṛṣabheṇa vā*', which stand for 'either *ukṣā* or *ṛṣabha*'. As such *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha* must be two different things and not one and the same thing. According to the dictionaries, *ukṣā* does not mean '*go-vatsa*' or calf, while both words *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha*, if interpreted as an animal of the bovine species, will mean bull (as impregnating the flock) i.e. one and the same thing. Hence the word *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha*, with the conjunctions 'either' and 'or', cannot mean one and the same thing i.e. bull (as impregnating the flock). By adding the conjunctions 'either ... or' to '*ukṣā*' and '*ṛṣabha*' the seer of the verse must have intended to represent two different things. In the field of medicine '*ukṣā*' may also mean '*ṛṣabha*', but with the words' either and 'or' added with the words '*ukṣā*' and '*ṛṣabha*',

ukṣā' cannot mean 'ṛṣabha'. As such 'ukṣā' stands for 'soma' (as sprinkling or scattering small drops) and 'ṛṣabha' signifies a medicinal plant as described in the Caraka-Saṁhitā, Suśruta-Saṁhitā and Bhāva-Prakāśa.

In Caraka-Saṁhitā, Volume I, Chapter IV. 13, the first *mahākaṣāya* consisting of ten medicines, among which '*ṛṣabhaka*' is one, are termed as '*jīvanīya*' or energy-increasing. The text is as follows :—

1 2 3 4 5 6 7-8

जीवकर्षभकौ मेदा महामेदा काकोली क्षीरकाकोली मुद्गमाषपर्ण्यौ

9 10

जीवन्ती मधुकमिति दशेमानि जीवनीयानि भवन्ति।

In the 38th Chapter of the *sūtra-sthāna* of the Suśruta-Saṁhitā, which is named as dravya-saṅgrahaṇīya, '*ṛṣabhaka*' is one of several items.

In Bhāva-Prakāśa, Pūrva-khand '*ṛṣabhaka*' is one of the eight medicaments. The text is as follows :—

1 2 3-4 5-6 7 8

जीवकर्षभकौ मेदे काकोल्यौ ऋद्धिवृद्धिके ॥१२०॥

Among the various qualities of *aṣṭa-varga* or the eight medicaments, the most important are : *bṛṁhaṇa* aphrodisiac ; *śukra-janaka*—semen-producing ; and *bala-bardhaka*—tonic.

It is further mentioned there that the '*ṛṣabha*' medicine is found on Himalayan peaks. It is shaped like the horn of a bull.

From the several references quoted above as well as from verses 1, 14, 15, 16 and 17 of the same chapter of Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, it is amply clear that '*ukṣā*' and '*ṛṣabha*' in verse 18 can mean only two different medicinal plants referred to in Ayurvedic texts and not the meat of a calf or an ox (whether full-grown or old) in any case.

Commentary of Jagatguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya

Jagadguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya's Sanskrit Commentary on controversial kaṇḍikā 6.4.18 of Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, is often cited in favour of the prescription of beef. Some contend that it is evident from this commentary that even Jagadguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya has accepted the prescription of partaking of rice cooked with beef for a couple desirous of begetting progeny well-versed in the four Vedas. The wording of the commentary is as follows :

"विविधं गीतो विगीतः प्रख्यात इत्यर्थः। समितिंगमः समां गच्छतीति प्रगल्भ इत्यर्थः। पाण्डित्यस्य पृथग्ग्रहणात्। शुश्रूषितां श्रोतुमिष्टां रमणीयां वाचं भाषिता संस्कृतायाः अर्थवत्या वाचो भाषितेत्यर्थः।

मांसमिश्रमोदनं मांसौदनम्। तन्मांसनियमार्थमाह-औक्षेण वा मांसेन। उक्षा सेचनसमर्थः पुंगवस्तदीयं मांसम्। ऋषभस्ततोऽप्यधिक वयास्तदीयमार्षभं मांसम्।"

There is no difference of opinion about the translation of the first part of the commentary which is as follows :

"One whose importance is sung in varied ways is called vigita. *Vigita* i.e., renowned. *Samitiṅgama* i.e., a fearless or undaunted person who attends the assembly of the learned. As learned has been specified separately in the text, the word *samitiṅgama* has not been taken in the sense of a scholar or learned person. *Suśrūṣitā* is affable in speech, speaker of charming expression, i.e., a coherent speaker endowed with *saṁskāras*".

The meaning of the latter part is as follows :

"Cooked rice mixed with *māṁsa* is *māṁsaudana*. The māṁsa is further specified as : that of *ukṣā*, *ukṣā* is a pungent potent in impregnation ; or that of a *ṛṣabha* of *vayas* exceeding that of *ukṣā*".

This is the literal meaning. Jagadguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya has not clarified whether it is the meat of an animal or whether it is the *māṁsa i.e.*, fleshy part of medicinal fruits. In such a situation it has to be considered in the light of its context, whether the meat of an animal is appropriate here or the fleshy part of medicinal fruits. This will be clear by considering the signification of *secana-samarthaḥ puṅgavaḥ* and of 'a *ṛṣabha* exceeding in *vayas* than that of *ukṣā*'. There is no difference of opinion about the meaning of *secana-samarthaḥ* which is potent in impregnation. The meanings of the words *ukṣā, puṅgava, ṛṣabha* and *vayas* will have to be considered.

The meaning of *ukṣā* has been discussed earlier in this chapter.

The meanings of the word *puṅgava* are given by Monier Williams in his Sanskrit-English Dictionary p. 630, column 3 (lines 8-11 from bottom) as follows :

"a bull, a hero, eminent person, chief of, a kind of drug".

On their basis, the meaning of *secana-samarthaḥ puṅgavaḥ* can be :

(i) a stud-bull potent in impregnation.
(ii) a hero potent in impregnation.
(iii) an eminent person potent in impregnation.
(iv) a chief potent in impregnation.
(v) a kind of drug potent in impregnation.

The herb potent in impregnation has been termed as *vājikaraṇa* or aphrodisiac in *Āyurveda*. *Soma* is also an aphrodisiac herb (a drug of supposed magical property) which is a favourite of the gods. According to Hindu scriptures one attains birth among the gods for enjoying the fruits of one's meritorious deeds. These include all enjoyments according to one's inclination or longing. The Purāṇas recount a number of legends of the amours of the gods enjoying the fruits of their meritorious deeds. Therefore, it is not surprising that the herbal juice of *soma* which is potent in impregnation, should have been such a favourite of the gods enjoying the fruits of their meritorious deeds. Now, the readers should themselves consider as to which

Commentary of Jagatguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya

of the five meanings mentioned above will be more appropriate and in accordance with the context for '*ukṣā secana-samarthaḥ*'. Taking the contextual propriety into consideration, the meaning 'a herb (*ukṣā*, i.e. *soma* juice) potent in impregnation' will be the most appropriate and relevant.

The meaning of '*tataḥ api adhika-vayāḥ*' is 'one exceeding in *vayas* than that'. The base of *vayāḥ* is *vayas*. The meanings of the word *vayas* are given as under in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, page 920, columns 2, 3 :

(i) enjoyment, food, meal, oblation ;
(ii) energy (both bodily and mental), strength, health, vigour, power, might ;
(iii) vigorous age, youth, prime of life, any period of life, age.

Accordingly, *tataḥ api adhika-vayāḥ* will mean :
(i) more enjoyable than that ;
(ii) more energetic than that ;
(iii) more invigorating than that.

The meanings of *ṛṣabha* as given by Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary have been cited already. In the section on plants and herbs in the Amarakośa 2.116 it is rendered as *ṛṣgī tu ṛṣabho vṛṣaḥ*. The plant *ṛṣgī* is also called *ṛṣabha* and *vṛṣa*. This plant *ṛṣgī* is an aphrodisiac.

If we take it as the flesh of the bovine *ṛṣabha* (bull) here, then the meaning of '*ṛṣabhaḥ tataḥ api adhika-vayāḥ*' will be 'the bovine *ṛṣabha* who is older in age than the *ukṣā* capable of impregnating the bovine species'. But the reality of the situation is that the vigorous age for impregnation is growing youth and not the advancing age (declining youth). So this meaning does not fit in the context.

Taking the context into account *ṛṣabhaḥ tataḥ api adhika-vayāḥ* will mean, 'a medicine of *aṣṭavarga* called *ṛṣabha* which is more

invigorating even than *soma* juice'. This medicine is often prescribed by Āyurvedic practitioners for frequent use by the rich to keep their sexual powers undiminished. The medicine of the *aṣṭavarga* is an aphrodisiac which increases semen.

The prescription of beef is impossible, particularly because the bovine species is declared as inviolable in *Vedas*. There is no mention of meat in this section from its very first kaṇḍikā among the items which ultimately result in the best, purest *sāttvika* semen. And only the purest *sāttvika* semen is required for begetting progeny proficient in the Vedas. Therefore, in the present passage *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha* can never signify the meat of animals, but they can only mean the fleshy part of pulp of pure medicinal fruits.

In none of the dictionaries do we find that the word *ukṣā* means 'a stud-bull of younger age, potent in impregnation' or that the word *ṛṣabha* means 'an older stud-bull potent in impregnation'. If we take that according to Jagadguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya, both the words *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha* mean stud bulls potent in impregnation, and one of them be younger while the other be older, then the words *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha* taken collectively, will mean, a bull of any age potent in impregnation.

If, in the *māṅsaudana*, the meat of a bull of any age, potent in impregnation had been intended then in the original Upaniṣad the wording would have been *govaṁsa aukṣeṇa* (bovine *ukṣā*) or *govaṁsa ārṣabheṇa* (bovine *ṛṣabha*) and Jagadguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya, to make it clear beyond doubt that the meat of the stud-bull is intended, would aslo have written, *secana-samarthaḥ govaṁsa-puṅgavaḥ tadiyam māṅsam*'.

Stud-bulls potent in impregnation are of a very high breed and also very rare. Their slaughter will never be desirable. Moreover, the original words in the text are *aukṣeṇa vā ārṣabheṇa vā*, that is, either of an *ukṣā* or of a *ṛṣabha*'. The use of the conjunctions 'vā ...... vā i.e. 'either...... or' itself indicates that *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha* are not the same, but distinctly different. Therefore, it is impossible that a highly learned personality like the Jagadguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya would

interpret as a tautology the words *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha* signifying 'a stud-bull as long as it is potent in impregnation', when the contradistinctive conjuction 'vā......vā' i.e. 'either......or' is used to contrast the words *ukṣā* and *ṛṣabha*. It is certain that '*ukṣā secana-samartha puṅgavaḥ* as used in the commentary of Jagadguru Ādi-Śaṅkarācārya means an aphrodisiac drug, i.e. *soma* juice, and '*tataḥ api adhika-vayāḥ*' means 'the drug ṛṣabha of the *aṣṭavarga*, which is supposed to be more invigorating even than ukṣā i.e. *soma* juice'.



WERE COWS SLAUGHTERED AT KING RANTIDEVA'S PLACE ?

In the booklet 'Beef In Ancient India' by Raja Rajendralala Mitra, it is stated on page iii of the 'Preface' that according to the Mahābhārata, 2000 cows used to be slaughtered every day at King Rantideva's place to entertain guests. In support of this assertion the following verse has been quoted from Vana-parva, Chapter 207. Actually this verse is not found in Chapter 207, but occurs in Chapter 208 of the Chitrashala edition and in Chapter 199 of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute edition :—

राज्ञो महानसे पूर्वं रन्तिदेवस्य वै द्विज ।
द्वे सहस्त्रे तु वध्येते पशूनामन्वहं तदा ।
अहन्यहनि वध्येते द्वे सहस्त्रे गवां तथा ॥

In this verse, interpreting the word *vadhyete* as 'used to be slaughtered', it is being propagated that 2000 cows and 2000 animals used to be slaughtered every day in the kitchen of King Rantideva. According to Pānini's Sanskrit grammar, this cannot be the correct interpretation, which we will discuss later.

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, in their renowned publication 'The History and Culture of the Indian People' whose General Editor is Shri R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.A.S.B. has also stated in Vol. II, page 579 as follows :—

> "According to Mahābhārata, a King called Rantideva killed every day two thousand cattle and two thousand kine in order to dole out meat to the people."

They have neither quoted nor given a reference to the Mahābhārata in this respect. It appears that their ideas are also based on the above quoted verse. They must have also done so following in the foot-steps

of other persons without caring to study the full context, which is most unfair on the part of an institution like the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, whose publications carry weight with the general public.

This verse, along with a few more, is not available in all the editions of the Mahābhārata. Wherever this verse exists it is followed by another verse. The lines of this further verse read as follows :

समांसं ददतो ह्यन्नं रन्तिदेवस्य नित्यशः ।
अतुला कीर्तिरभवन्नृपस्य द्विजसत्तम ॥

It means : "O superior among Dvijas ! King Rantideva earned unparalleled glory by serving guests with such meat."

Let us now consider the propriety of this verse.

Incompatibility of Rantideva's Glory by Animal-Slaughter while Propagating Ahiṁsā

At this place in the Vana-parva of the Mahābhārata, a Dharma-vyādha, while giving discourse to a Kauśika Brāhmana, discusses the merits of non-violence vis-a-vis violence. In the previous chapter he has preached non-violence as the greatest virtue in verse no. 74 of the Gita Press and Chitrashala edi ions and verse no. 69 of the Bhandarkar Institute edition. He has not quoted any historical incident as an example.

Taking into consideration the previous context of the subject, no sane person will admit that after preaching non-violence as the supreme religion in the previous chapter, and praising non-violence and decrying violence in the chapter under discussion, any historical example of attainment of fame by any king by practising violence by way of killing 2000 innocent animals and 2000 innocent cows every day, could be quoted by the Dharma-vyādha. The assertion that two thousand innocent cows and two thousand other innocent animals were slaughtered at King Rantideva's place, is entirely baseless. In the Mahābhārata, there are several other testimonia which attest that this assertion has no foundation in fact, such as :—

(1) In Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana-parva, Chapter 115, in verse 63-67 of the Gita Press edition and verses 72-76 in the Chitrashala edition, names of various kings of ancient times are quoted, who were never addicted to any sort of meat-eating. Among them, the name of King Rantideva is also mentioned. These verses appear in Chapter 116 and are numbered 67 to 70 in the Bhandarkar Institute edition.

If Brāhmaṇas would have been served beef and/or ordinary meat at King Rantideva's place, then the king himself would have taken beef and/or meat as *prasādam*, in which case his name would not have found place among kings who never took meat.

(2) Even if one insists that the text *samāṁsam dadato hyannam* is correct, then too, considering the special virtues of King Rantideva, which will be described later, *māṃsam* cannot mean the meat of an animal body. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 11.7.1.3 the word *māṁsa* is equivalent to and carries the same meaning as *paramānnam*—एतद्‌ ह वै परममन्नाद्यं यन्मासम्—and *paramānnam* according to the Sanskrit lexicon Amarakośa 2.7.24 is *pāyasam* prepared with the admixture of milk, rice and sugar—परमान्नं तु पायसम्। Thus it would mean that King Rantideva earned fame by entertaining Brāhmaṇas with *pāyasam* and not with animal meat.

(3) If 2000 cows are killed every day, then 7,20,000 cows would have been killed in a year. If this had continued year after year, then the cow progeny would have gradually vanished from the earth. As such, from the practical point of view also, this does not appear to be justified.

(4) Again in the Mahābhārata (Gita Press and Chitrashala editions), Droṇa-parva, Chapter 67, Nārada is describing to King Sṛñjaya, the greatness of King Rantideva, wherein he has said that Rantideva made gifts to Brāhmaṇas out of

his honest and just income in which thousands of '*niṣka*' used to be given daily. There, a '*niṣka*' is defined as equal to "1000 golden bulls and 100 cows as well as 108 gold coins with each bull".

(5) In the Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva, Chapter 262, verse 47 in the Gita Press and Chitrashala editions and Chapter 254, verse 45 in the Bhandarkar Institute edition, it is stated :

अघ्न्या इति गवां नाम क एता हन्तुमर्हति ।
महच्चकाराकुशलं वृषं गां वाऽऽलभेत् तु यः ॥

meaning thereby that in Śruti the cow is referred to as *aghnyā* 'not to be killed' ; as such who can even think of killing a cow ? He who kills a cow and/or a bull, commits a great sin.

Let the readers consider, whether it is consistent or possible for such a pious king to get 2000 innocent animals and 2000 innocent cows slaughtered in his kitchen for the entertainment of guests.

As the cow is inviolable (not to be killed) and also in view of the foregoing facts about King Rantideva in the Mahābhārata, no sensible person can believe the assertion of Raja Rajendralal Mitra in his English monograph : 'Beef in Ancient India' that two thousand innocent cows and two thousand other innocent animals were slaughtered to feed meat to guests.

Many persons, either being themselves ignorant of the Sanskrit language or not willing to take pains to consult the quoted passage in its context in the original books, take it for granted that a passage quoted by a famous person and announced publicly and published in the press, must be correct beyond doubt. But the facts are not so.

Misleading Views expressed by Shri Mukandi Lal, formerly Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of United Provinces, and by Rahul Sankrityayan

Recently, tendencious book 'Cow Slaughter—Horns of a Dilemma' has been published by Lalwani Publishing House, which is edited by one Shri A.B. Shah, who has been Professor of Mathematics & Statistics for about 20 years at the Universities of Poona and Bombay and who is at present Director of Programmes in India for the Congress of Cultural Freedom. It contains similar irrelevant material. In this book, an article 'Cow—Cult in India' has been published, which is written by one Shri Mukandi Lal, an Oxford Graduate and a Barrister-at-Law, who was Deputy Speaker of the U.P. Legislative Assembly during the British period in the years 1927-30. The shallowness of personal knowledge of Shri Mukandi Lal is clear from his statement on page 31, wherein he has stated that the great Vaiṣṇava saint Vallabhācārya translated the Bhāgavata Purāṇa in Hindi. Shri Vallabhācārya has written his commentary on the Bhāgavata Purāṇa in Sanskrit, which is entitled 'Subodhini'. In this essay propagating cow-slaughter in the ancient period, Shri Mukandi Lal has quoted freely from Shri Rahul Sankrityayan's Hindi book *Volgā se Gangā*. He himself has not taken pains to consult the texts in the original. Let us discuss these quotations and also consider what Shri Rahul Sankrityayan has alleged.

In a foot-note to page 228 of his book, Rahul Sankrityayan has quoted three lines of two verses from the Droṇa-parva, Chapter 67. The first śloka and the first-half of the second śloka read as follows :

सांकृतिं रन्तिदेवं च मृतं सृंजय शुश्रुम ।
यस्य द्विशतसाहस्रा आसन् सूदा महात्मनः ॥
गृहानभ्यागतान् विप्रानतिथीन् परिवेषकाः ॥

These lines have been interpreted by Shri Rahul Sankrityayan and have been accepted as correct by Shri Mukandi Lal, that two thousand cooks were employed in the kitchen of King Rantideva to cook beef.

The number of cooks in the Sanskrit text is 200 thousands (*dvi-śata-sahasra*) and not two thousand. From these interpretations one can fathom the knowledge of Shri Rahul Sankrityayan and Mukandi Lal as regards Sanskrit. 'To cook beef' is not mentioned in these lines anywhere. Rahul Sankrityayan has cleverly omitted the latter half of the second śloka reading :

पक्वापक्वं दिवारात्रं वरान्नममृतोपमम् ।

All the four lines of the two verses quoted above are interpreted in the Gita Press edition as follows :—

> Nārada, explaining to King Sṛñjaya who was miserable due to the death of his young son, said :
> "O Sṛñjaya, it is said that Sāṅkṛti's son Rantideva also could not live for ever, though that great king used to employ two lakh cooks in his kitchen, who prepared nectar-like meals both unfried (consisting of dal, rice, etc.) and fried (poori, kachori, sweets, vegetables, etc.) for Brāhmana guests and used to serve them day and night".

Later, two other lines of the same chapter reading as follows have been grossly misinterpreted by Rahul Sankrityayan :

तत्र स्म सूदाः क्रोशन्ति सुमृष्टमणिकुण्डलाः ।
सूपं भूयिष्ठमश्नीध्वं नाद्य मासं यथा पुरा ॥

Shri Rahul Sankrityayan has changed the word *māsam* meaning 'month' to *māṁsam* meaning 'meat' and interpreted these as follows :—

> "The number of guests used to increase to such an extent that due to shortage of meat, the cooks had to request them to accept more quantity of soup."

The paraphrasing according to the correct text and its interpretation as given in the Gita Press edition are as follows ;

"*Sudāḥ* (the cooks) *sumṛṣṭa-maṇikuṇḍalaḥ* (wearing glittering and jewel-studded pendants) *kroṣanti sma* (used to speak loudly) *tatra* there) (that) *aśnidhvam* (you all eat) *bhūyiṣṭham* (as much as possible) *sūpam* (liquid preparations like dal, cury, etc.) *yathā* (a kind of which) *nādya* (has not been prepared) *māsam purā* (since the last one month)."

In the second line of the above quoted verse of the Mahābhārata, Drona-parva 67.2, the phrase *varānnam amṛto pamam* means that the food served to Brāhmaṇas was high class, and tasted like nectar. The word *varānnam* literally meaning 'supreme food' is equivalent to the word *paramānnam*. The Sanskrit dictionary Amarakoṣa 2.7.74 says "*paramānnam tu pāyasam* (a preparation made by boiling rice in milk and then mixing sugar with it)." It has been discussed already. As such, the cows at King Rantideva's kitchen could be present only for the supply of milk for making *pāyasa* and not to be slaughtered for beef. A slaughter-house, which is always so dirty, is never situated near a habitation and in no case near the kitchen or inside the kitchen. As such it is clear that in King Rantideva's kitchen, neither cows nor other animals used to be slaughtered for serving beef or meat to the guests.

The above episode in the Droṇaparva is narrated by Vyāsa-deva to console King Yudhiṣṭhira, when he was in grief after the death of his nephew Abhimanyu. This episode is said to have been narrated by Devarṣi Nārada to King Sṛñjaya long long ago, when the latter was very miserable due to the death of his son. The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, considers this episode to be an interpolation† and it has not included this in its critical edition of the Mahābhārata.

†With the stanza commences the story of the sixteen Great Kings, which is found duplicate in the Droṇaparva. The occasion in the Droṇaparva, the death of Abhimanyu, would lead one to suppose that these sixteen stories must have been first told in the Droṇaparva and subsequently repeated in the Śāntiparva. But the fact seems to have been otherwise. There are also some variations in the names of the kings and in the sequence of the stories, as can be seen at a glance. ——

(*Contd. to next page bottom*)

This episode is said to have been narrated briefly in the Śāntiparva by Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa to King Yudhiṣṭhira, when he was in grief due to the destruction of practically his entire family. At this place (Śāntiparva, Chapter 29) verse 128 in both the Gita Press and Chitrashala editions, has a text identical with that of the above quoted verse "तत्र स्म सूदाः ······ मासं यथा पुरा" with the difference that the word *māsam* in the last portion of the verse is *māṁsam* in the Chitrashala edition while in the Gita Press edition it is *bhojyam*. The text of this verse with the word *bhojyam* is admitted by Rahul Sankrityayan as well (see his Hindi book *Volgā se Gangā*, page 228, last line of the foot-note). The same verse appears in the edition of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in the Śāntiparva, Chapter 29, verse 120 and there also the reading is *māṁsam*, but it is stated that in manuscript no. 198 of the Bombay Government Collection 1891-95, the reading of this word in the Kashmirean recension is *bhojyam*. In the last part of the verse *tatra sma sūdā*......the text *māṁsam* is not relevant according to the principle of *ahiṁsā paramo dharmaḥ*. As such, the reading of this word either as *māsam* or as *bhojyam* is the only correct text. So the fame of King Rantideva can never rest on the daily slaughter of 2000 innocent animals and 2000 innocent cows, but this can be by rearing them and giving them away in gifts.

True Facts of King Rantideva's Glory as narrated in the Mahābhārata

In the Śāntiparva, the fame of King Rantideva is further sung in verse 7 of Chapter 292 in the Gita Press and Chitrashala editions and chapter 281 of the Bhandarkar Institute edition. There too, it is due to entertaining Ṛṣis with fruits and tubers and not with meat. The text is as follows :

(*Continued from previous page*)

"As far as the Droṇaparva list is concerned, [illegible] the Kashmir [illegible] the chapter altogether, it is obvious that there is a duplication from the *Śāntiparva* original, probably by one interested in glorifying the Bhṛgus". [illegible] edition of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, Vol. 13, Śāntiparva Rājadharma, page 649 of the critical notes on chapter 29.

रन्तिदेवेन लोकेष्टा सिद्धिः प्राप्ता महात्मना ।
फलपत्रैरथो मूलैर्मुनीनर्चितवांश्च सः ॥

In the Mahābhārata Śāntiparva (Rājadharma) chapter 29, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa narrates an episode to King Yudhiṣṭhira, grieved by the destruction of practically his entire family. Once upon a time this episode was narrated by Sage Nārada to King Sṛñjaya who was in grief due to his son's death. Herein a number of ancient kings have been mentioned, who were highly endowed with Dharma, knowledge (*jñāna*), renunciation (*vairāgya*) and affluence (*aiśvarya*) and who by their noble deeds had earned a good name but they too could not live for ever. Among those noble deeds which earned them a good name, there is no mention of the killing of animals or cows, but on the other hand, gift of cows has been clearly specified. King Rantideva's name is also quoted there. Instances of the gift of cows are as follows (the verse numbers indicated below are of the Gita Press and Chitrashala editions, followed by those of the Bhandarkar Institute edition) :

शतं शतसहस्राणि वृषाणां हेममालिनाम् ।
गवां सहस्रानुचरं दक्षिणामत्यकालयत् ॥ (34-35 ; 30)

This verse mentions the gift of a crore of cows and bulls with gold chains around their necks accompanied by thousands of servicemen by King Bṛhadratha of the Aṅga country.

तावतीः प्रददौ गाः स शिबिरौशीनरोऽध्वरे । (42 ; 37)

Gift of lakhs of cows by King Śibi in his yajña is prescribed in the above verse.

शतं गवां सहस्राणि शतमश्वतराणि च । (115 ; 108)
तावतीरेव गाः प्रादादमूर्तरयसो गयः ॥ (118 ; 111)

In the above, lakhs of cows were donated by King Gaya.

ब्राह्मणेभ्यो ददौ निष्कान् सदसि प्रतते नृपः ।
तुभ्यं निष्कं तुभ्यं निष्कमिति क्रोशन्ति वै द्विजाः ॥
सहस्रं तुभ्यमित्युक्त्वा ब्राह्मणान् सम्प्रपद्यते ।
अन्वाहार्योपकरणं द्रव्योपकरणं च यत् ॥
घटाः पात्र्यः कटाहानि स्थाल्यश्च पिठराणि च ।
नासीत् किंचिदसौवर्णं रन्तिदेवस्य धीमतः ॥
सांकृते रन्तिदेवस्य यां रात्रिमवसन् गृहे ।
आलभ्यन्त शतं गावः सहस्राणि च विंशतिः ॥
(124-127 ; 117-119)

The above verses describe gifts by King Rantideva amounting to thousands of Niṣkas and thousands of cows. The word *ālabhyanta* in the above verses does not mean violence, but means touching for the purpose of giving away.

In the whole of this chapter, several kings including King Rantideva are named, who earned fame and good name, but nowhere is it said that they did so by killing animals and/or cows.

Throughout the world, at places where violence (killing of animals) is not considered a sinful practice, there is not a single instance, where one could have earned fame and good name by killing living beings. Fame and good name is earned by bravery in battle, which may include killing of opponents, or by killing of undesirable characters which becomes necessary for the protection of innocent persons from their clutches. No other type of killing of living beings can earn fame and good name. In the episode of King Rantideva, neither instance of bravery in war nor protection of the helpless from undesirables is narrated as such. Killing of 2000 innocent animals and 2000 innocent cows cannot be the cause of his fame and good name, but this is possible by giving away cows as gifts, which is more logical.

At several places in the Mahābhārata '*ahiṁsā*' is praised and '*hiṁsā*' is denounced (see quotations from the Mahābhārata under the caption 'Non-violence is Supreme in Religious Scriptures'). In Anuśāsanaparva, Chapters 114, 115 and 116 of Gita Press edition and 115, 116 and 117 of Bhandarkar Research Institute edition are full of superiority of '*Ahiṁsā*'. Some verses therefrom are quoted below. The reference numbers of chapters and verses are from the Gita Press edition followed by the Bhandarkar Research Institute edition :—

यथा नागपदेऽन्यानि पदानि पदगामिनां ।
सर्वाण्येवापिधीयन्ते पदजातानि कौञ्जरे ॥ 114.6 ; 115.6
एवं लोकेष्वहिंसा तु निर्दिष्टा धर्मतः पुरा । 114.7 ; 115.6

As the footprints of all other moving living-beings are engulfed in those of the elephant, even so all other religions are to be comprehended in *ahiṁsā*.

अहिंसा परमो धर्मस्तथाहिंसा परं तपः ।
अहिंसा परमं सत्यं यतो धर्मः प्रवर्तते ॥ 115.23 ; 116.25

Abstention from injury (*ahiṁsā*) is the highest religion ; it is again the highest penance ; it is also the highest truths from which all duties proceed.

अहिंसा परमो धर्मस्तथाहिंसा परो दमः ।
अहिंसा परमं दानमहिंसा परमं तपः ॥ 116.28 ; 117.37

अहिंसा परमो यज्ञस्तथाहिंसा परं फलम् ।
अहिंसा परमं मित्रमहिंसा परमं सुखम् ॥ 116.29 ; 117.38

Abstention from cruelty (*ahiṁsā*) is the highest religion.
Abstention from cruelty is the highest self-control.
Abstention from cruelty is the highest gift.
Abstention from cruelty is the highest penance.

Abstention from cruelty is the highest yajña.
Abstention from cruelty is the highest puissance.
Abstention from cruelty is the highest friend.
Abstention from cruelty is the highest happiness.

सर्वयज्ञेषु वा दानं सर्वतीर्थेषु वाऽऽप्लुतम् ।
सर्वदानफलं वापि नैतत्तुल्यमहिंसया ॥ 116.30 ; 117.39

Gifts made in all *yajñas*, ablutions performed in all sacred water, and the merits that one acquires from making all kinds of gifts mentioned in the scriptures—all these do not come up to abstention from cruelty (in point of the merit that attaches to it).

In the Mahābhārata, where *ahiṁsā* is so much praised, it would not have been possible to praise the glory of King Rantideva therein, had there been killing of cows or other animals at his place.

Possible Reasons of Naming the River as Carmaṇvati

On page 277 of his Hindi book *Volgā se Gaṅgā*, Rahul Sankrityayan has stated that from the undried raw hide of 2000 cows, which used to be killed every day in the kitchen of King Rantideva and stored there, liquids oozed out, which became a river which was named 'Carmaṇvati' due to its water being accumulated from the carma (hide) of the cows. In support he has quoted the following verse in the foot-note :

महानदी चर्मराशेरुत्क्लेदात् ससृजे यतः ।
ततश्चर्मण्वतीत्येवं विख्याता सा महानदी ॥

The verse is from chapter 29 of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata but the serial number of the verses differ in the editions of the Gita Press, Chitrashala and Bhandarkar Institute. We will discuss this verse and others appearing along with it. The whole context is quoted below. The serial numbers quoted against these verses are those given in the Gita Press edition :—

उपातिष्ठन्त पशवः स्वयं तं संशितव्रतम् ।
ग्राम्यारण्या महात्मानं रन्तिदेवं यशस्विनम् ॥१२२॥

Animals from villages and forests used to come themselves* for the *yajña* of famous and magnanimous King Rantideva, who used to observe very strict vows. (122)

महानदी चर्मराशेरुत्क्लेदात् ससृजे यतः ।
ततश्चर्मण्वतीत्येवं विख्याता सा महानदी ॥१२३॥

The water flowing from the wet *carma* took the shape of a big river, which became famous as Carmaṇvatī (Chambal). (123)

ब्राह्मणेभ्यो ददौ निष्कान् सदसि प्रतते नृपः ।
तुभ्यं निष्कं तुभ्यं निष्कमिति क्रोशन्ति वै द्विजाः ॥१२४॥
सहस्रं तुभ्यमित्युक्त्वा ब्राह्मणान् सम्प्रपद्यते ।

The king used to offer gold *Niṣka* to the Brāhmaṇas in *yajña*. The Dvijas used to exclaim—"O Brāhmaṇa ! these *Niṣkas* are for you", but no one used to come forward to accept them. When they offered a 1000 *Niṣkas*, then they could find people to accept them. (124, first half of 125).

अन्वाहार्योपकरणं द्रव्योपकरणं च यत् ॥१२५॥
घटाः पात्र्यः कटाहानि स्थाल्यश्च पिठराणि च ।
नासीत् किंचिदसौवर्णं रन्तिदेवस्य धीमतः ॥१२६॥

For the *yajña* of wise king Rantideva, the utensils for offering oblation or for collection of materials—pots, plates, cauldrons, pans, vessels—were all made of gold. (125-126)

सांकृते रन्तिदेवस्य यां रात्रिमवसन् गृहे ।
आलभ्यन्त शतं गावः सहस्राणि च विंशतिः ॥१२७॥

*See footnote on page 79-80.

When a crowd of guests spent a night at the place of King Rantideva, the son of Sāṅkṛti, then 20,100 cows used to be gifted to them by touch. (127)

तत्र स्म सूदाः क्रोशन्ति सुमृष्टमणिकुण्डलाः ।
सूपं भूयिष्ठमश्नीध्वं नाद्य भोज्यं यथा पुरा ॥१२८॥

The cooks, wearing polished and bright jewelled pendants, used to announce that all of you please eat liquid preparations (like dal, curry, etc.). The food prepared today is of very high order, the type of which has never been prepared before.

From these verses, it is amply clear that there was no animal killing at King Rantideva's place. If there would have been killing, then the animals would have never gone of their own accord to the *yajña* of King Rantideva, as stated in verse 122.

In the Shrimad-Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa VII. 15.10, it is stated :

द्रव्ययज्ञैर्यक्ष्यमाणं दृष्ट्वा भूतानि बिभ्यति ।
एष माकरुणो हन्यादतज्ज्ञो ह्यसुतृप् ध्रुवम् ॥

Seeing one proceeding to propitiate the Lord through sacrifices conducted with material substances, animals grow apprehensive lest the merciless fellow, who is ignorant of the truth of the spirit and is (therefore) given to the (mere) gratification of his self, will surely kill them.

In the Rām-charit-mānas of Gosvami Tulsidas also it is stated :

मुनिगन निकट बिहग मृग जाहीं । बाधक बधिक बिलोकि पराहीं ॥

(Ayodhyā-kāṇḍa, between *dohā* 263 and 264)

meaning that birds and animals go to the sages, while they run away on seeing a hunter who entices and kills them.* The idea of animals

On page 56, lines 19-23 of Urdu book '[illegible]*' (containing [illegible] of Muslim saints) which is translated from the Persian book '*[illegible]*', an incident is narrated therein as follows :—

(Contd. to next page bottom)

coming by themselves was only because of affection, that is to love and to be loved. The cattle might have been going to the *yajña* to serve with their milk or for rendering similar other services. Then, gift by King Rantideva is also described. From this, it appears that King Rantideva used to donate them at the *yajña*. Before giving away as a gift, these animals must have been washed and bathed to make them clean, and they were beautified by decoration. The water used for washing their skin (*carma*) used to flow in quite a big quantity, which might have taken the shape of a river, which became famous as Carmaṇvati (Chambal).

The description as given by Rahul Sankrityayan indicates that cows used to be slaughtered in the kitchen, their beef cooked, the hides (*carma*) used to be stored there and the liquid dripping from these hides (*carma*) became a river. The first argument is that even beef eaters do not slaughter cows in the kitchen, neither do they store hide (*carma*) in the kitchen. Secondly, liquid dripping from the hides cannot be of such a huge quantity, which can take the shape of a river. As such, the impossible imagination of Rahul Sankrityayan cannot be accepted. Considering the context of the entire description, the only possibility is that the animals coming of their free will, before being gifted away, might have been washed and bathed and water flowing from washing the skin (*carma*) of living animals must have been taken the shape of a river, which might have been called 'Carmaṇvati'. This is more in keeping with the context.

(*Continued from previous page*)
"Hazrat Rabia Basri once went to a hill. Many animals gathered round her and started glancing at her with affection. At that time Hazrat Hasan Basri reached there. On seeing him all the animals ran away. Hazrat Hasan Basri enquired the reason of their flying away on seeing him and why they kept on staying near her. Hazrat Rabia questioned as to what diet had been taken by him. Reply came, 'I took meat diet'. She explained that when he had taken meat diet, it was natural for those animals to get scared on seeing him and to run away."

This incident is also narrated on page 16 of the Hindi book *Sufi-Sant-Charit*, 1961, published by Sasta Sahitya Mandal, New Delhi.

Such incidents clearly prove that the animals coming to the yajña of King Rantideva were doing so not for being slaughtered but for getting affection and for rendering services voluntarily.

Possible Reasons of Naming the River as Carmaṇvati

Shri Sudhir Kumar Gupta has edited the Meghaduta of the great poet Kālidāsa, along with the commentary of Mallinātha and he has given a literal Hindi translation with detailed annotations. In his notes on the 49th stanza of Pūrva-megha, which relates to the fame of King Rantideva, he writes as follows which is translated below into English :

> "In the Tāṇḍya-Brāhmaṇa 19.13.1 गोसवः क्रतुः is explained as अथैव गोसवः स्वराज्यो यज्ञः. The word 'Rantideva' means रन्तिः रमणं देवानां यस्मिन् सः or 'one in whom the learned rejoice', that is one who pleases scholars and hence is honoured by them. The word *ranti* occurs in this very sense in Yajur-Veda 22.19 (see Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa 13.1.6.2). Thus the *surabhitanayālambha yajña*, of the mighty king Rantideva who is honoured by the gods, is nothing else but the defence of his dominions. The river Carmaṇvati symbolises his glory. Its very banks have evidenced the King's munificence, love of learning, heroism, and devotion to the welfare of his people. The word *carmaṇvatī* is formed as *carman+vat+ī*. According to the Unadi-koṣa 4.115 (Rishi Dayanand's commentary, Ajmer, Vikrama era 1989) the word *carman* means चरति गच्छति येन तत् चर्म "whereby one moves unto or attains glory that is *carma*". So, being denotative of the glory of Rantideva it is termed Carmaṇvatī.

It can be interpreted in another way also. In the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa 3.97.5 (प्राणा वै सुरभयः) *surabhayaḥ* (सुरभयः) is interpreted as *prāṇāḥ* (प्राणाः). So सुरभितनयाः (वीरपुरुषाः, योद्धारः इति यावत्) तेषाम् आलम्भः (प्राप्तिः, स्वीकारः, ग्रहणम्) तस्मात् जाता that is, 'that which retains an immense army of heroes', or 'one who is the vanquisher of powerful warriors'. This interpretation denotes the mighty valour of the great king Rantideva—which is not at all impossible.

Mr. Sadhuram has suggested another interpretation : the *ālambha yajña* of agriculture, the daughter (तनया) of the earth

(सुरभि). Affording due facilities and protection for the crops of different seasons is verily 'the gomedha yajña or the agricultural culture of the land'. This is also a plausible suggestion. It is possible that the great king Rantideva had rendered the Chambal region into a highly fertile area lush with greenery, during his rule replete with yajñas."

In all the passages where King Rantideva is mentioned in literature, there is no contextual relevance of cow-slaughter. Those who have alleged it to be cow-slaughter, that is due either to their misunderstanding or to some ulterior motive.

In Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, two meanings of *Carmaṇvatī* are given as follows :

(i) Name of a river flowing through Bundelkhand and merging in the Gaṅgā ; modern name is Chambal.

(ii) *Musā Sapientum.* This is the technical term for banana or plantain tree in Botany. *Musā* is a synonym of Arabic *mauzah* and Sanskrit *mocha*.

The tract of land through which Chambal flows may have been covered with *Musā Sapientum* (banana trees) in ancient times and hence the river was named 'Carmaṇvatī'. It is possible that the cows meant for donation by King Rantideva used to graze in that tract of land and hence the name of the river 'Carmaṇvatī' came to be associated with King Rantideva's glory earned by donating cows. Be it as it may, this much is certain that the theory that the dripping of liquid from the hides of cows collected in King Rantideva's kitchen caused a stream to flow from their *carma* (hide) which came to be known as Carmaṇvatī—is baseless, and neither liquid dripping from a collected heap of hides can form a stream which could make a river like Chambal. As such, association of the name of the river Carmaṇvatī with the glory of King Rantideva can not prove that cows used to be slaughtered in King Rantideva's kitchen and their hides used to be stored there

and the liquid dripping from these hides caused a stream, which came to be known as 'Carmaṇvatī'.

If the whole episode is carefully studied from beginning to end, it will be found that there is no relevance of slaughter of cows, but of course there certainly is a propriety in giving them away in gift.

Rantideva in the Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa

In the Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa 9.21, the legend of King Rantideva is narrated. Its resume follows :

King Rantideva was so generous that without caring for his own self and for his family, he used to offer every day to others whatever he had or used to get. Once it so happened that after remaining hungry for 48 days, he got some *pāyasa* (milk-rice preparation), pudding, etc. As soon as they sat for their meals, a Brāhmaṇa guest arrived, who appeared to King Rantideva as God incarnate. The King entertained him with due respect. When the Brāhmaṇa went away and the king and his family sat down at meals with the remaining food, a Śūdra guest arrived. The king gave part of the food to that guest. When the Śūdra guest went away, then another guest accompanied by a few dogs arrived and demanded food for his hungry dogs, and King Rantideva respectfully offered all the remaining food and honoured them as so many manifestations of God. Now only water was left with them which too would suffice only for one person. They were just on the verge of drinking that water after sharing it amongst themselves, when a thirsty *caṇḍāla* arrived and beseeched for water. The king felt pity on him and offered the whole water to him and prayed to the Creator as follows :

न कामयेऽहं गतिमीश्वरात् परामष्टर्द्धियुक्तामपुनर्भवं वा ।
आर्तिं प्रपद्येऽखिलदेहभाजामन्तःस्थितो येन भवन्त्यदुःखाः ॥
(श्रीम० भा० ९.२१.१२)

I do not seek from the Lord the highest position attended with the eightfold Yogic power (*Aṇimā* and so on) or even final beatitude (cessation of rebirth). Dwelling in their hearts (as the sufferer) I would (rather) undergo the suffering of all the embodied souls, so that (through such vicarious sufferings of mine) they may be relieved of misery. (Bhāgavata 9.21.12).

A person, who does not seek the kingdom of heaven, the highest position attended with the eightfold yogic power or even beatitude and who prays for vicariously suffering himself to relieve others of misery—how can such a person think of even causing harm to any living being, let alone the question of slaughtering innocent animals.

As pointed out earlier, Mahābhārata, Vanaparva, chapter 208 deals with the subject of non-violence versus violence, and non-violence is established as a super virtue, and when no other historical example is quoted therein, it is incomprehensible how the episode of King Rantideva has been inserted there in a manner, which does not support the principle enunciated therein, but goes against it. In other words the principle established there is that non-violence is a super virtue and should be practised by all, violence is condemned as not worth to be practised. Hence the example of King Rantideva attaining high fame by slaughtering 2000 innocent animals and 2000 innocent cows every day in his kitchen for the entertainment of guests goes clearly against the context. As such it is more than certain that the verse referred to in the beginning of the article can never be authentic, and they are definitely interpolated. Some beef-eaters must have done so to misguide simple people. Śāntiparva, chapter 265, verse 9 supports this :

सुरा मत्स्या मधु मांसमासवं कृसरौदनम् ।
धूर्तैः प्रवर्तितं ह्येतन्नैतद् वेदेषु कल्पितम् ॥ (शान्तिपर्व २६५.९)

"Liquors, fish, mead, meat, spirits, rice cooked with sesamum (*til*) seeds—all these have been inserted into yajña by the wicked people. Vedas have not prescribed their use in *yajña*." (Śāntiparva 265.9)

Correct Meaning of 'vadhyete' According to Grammar

The meaning of the stanza cited by antagonists and quoted in the beginning of this study, should be considered in its due setting. The context preceding and succeeding in the same chapter as well as elsewhere in the Mahābhārata makes it clear that they never intended to convey the slaughter of two thousand innocent animals and two thousand innocent cows. In both the verses relevant to it, the word *vadhyete* is used, which has been mistranslated as 'were killed' or 'used to be killed' by the protagonists of cow-slaughter. In Sanskrit grammar, *vadh* (वध्) is not an independent root in the meaning of 'to kill' ; to convey this, the root *han* (हन्) is used. This is further corroborated by the *Uddyota* commentary on Mahābhāṣya (2.4.42-43) and by Śabdenduśekhara (3.1.133) *ṇvul trcau* (ण्वुल्तृचौ). The root *han* is substituted by *vadh* in certain cases. The rule according to Pāṇini 2.4.42-43 reads : *hano vadha liṅi luṅi ca* (हनो वध लिङि लुङि च). It means that the root *han* is substituted by *vadha* in the Benedictive (*liṅ* लिङ्) and also in the Aorist (*luṅ* लुङ्). There are two types of *liṅ* (लिङ्)—the Potential Mood (*vidhi-liṅ* विधिलिङ्) and the Benedictive Mood (*āśir-liṅ* आशीर्लिङ्). The root *han* is not substituted by *vadha* in both types of *liṅ* (लिङ्), but only in the Benedictive, which is used for benediction or blessing. In Pāṇini's grammar, the aphorism substituting *vadha* is preceded by the aphorism *ārdhadhātuke* (आर्धधातुके). This order of precedence in the Pāṇinian technique means that *vadha* will be substituted for the root *han* only in *ārdhadhātuka* (आर्धधातुक) which is a technical term for the perfect and benedictive. The substitution is not applicable to *sārvadhātuka* (सार्वधातुक) or the entire verbal base. Thus, except these two, the Benedictive Mood and the Perfect Tense, nowhere is the root *han* replaced by *vadha*. The form *vadhyete* used in the Mahābhārata pertains to neither of these two paradigms. In them the conjugated forms will be *avadhīt* (अवधीत्) and *vadhyāt* (वध्यात्). By no stretch of imagination can there be the form *vadhyete* in these two because *vadhyete* is a form of the Present Tense. In this tense *han* is never replaced by *vadha*. The forms of the Present run *hanyate* (हन्यते), *hanyete* (हन्येते) etc., as in *na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre* (न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे. Bhāgavad Gītā 2.20) : here

the root *han* is used to convey the idea of killing. If *vadha* were substituted in the Present Tense, then the passage would have read *na vadhyate vadhyamāne śarīre* (न वध्यते वध्यमाने शरीरे). But it is known to everyone that it is not so. So the word *vadhyete*, occuring in the two verses of the Rantideva episode of the Mahābhārata, cannot be considered to be an instance of the root *han* meaning 'to kill'. In Sanskrit grammar *vadh* in the sense of 'to kill' is not an independent root. As it cannot belong to the root *han* 'to kill', it is form of the root *badha bandhane* (बध बन्धने) meaning 'to tie, to bind'. In Sanskrit phonetics, *b* (बकार) and *v* (वकार), *r* (रकार) and *d* (डकार), *r* (रकार) and *l* (लकार) are undifferentiated. That is *b* (ब) can be used instead of *v* (व), *v* (ब) for *b* (ब), *r* (र) for *ḍ* (ड), *ḍ* (ड) for *r* (र), *r* (र) for *l* (ल) and *l* (ल) for *r* (र). The interchange of these letters is a common phenomenon. In tune with the considerations of Sanskrit grammar and also kepping in view the context, the correct meaning of *vadhyete* can only be "are tied".

The word *'badhyate'* is found in the chapter on marriage in Atharva-veda 14.1.26 and also in Ṛgveda 10.85.28 reading पतिर्बन्धेषु बध्यते where it is clearly interpreted even by Europeans as 'the husband is bound in bonds (of family life)'.

As such, the verse of Mahābhārata under consideration would really mean that two thousand cattle used to be kept near the kitchen by chaining to the peg, so that their products like milk may be available readily even at odd times for the guests. The idea of keeping other 2000 animals may be for utilising them for transport of materials needed in the reception of guests.

Be it known that this verse is not found in all the editions of Mahābhārata. As already explained, the Dharma-Vyādha while preaching to Kauśika Brāhmaṇa on various subjects has not quoted any historical example. The dialogue between Dharma-Vyādha and Kauśika Brāhmaṇa is spread over ten chapters in

Vana-parva in verses approximating the number of days in a year out of which about 20 verses recount the previous birth of Dharma-Vyādha and about three-quarters of a hundred relate to the querries by Kauśika Brāhmaṇa. The balance of nearly 250 verses relates to the preaching by Dharma-Vyādha. Out of these, no historical example is quoted on any subject dealt with in the preaching. Quoting historical instances in preaching *ahimsā* (non-violence) is against the system of preaching by Dharma-Vyādha, particularly against the context of the subject as interpreted by the protagonists. Hence it is also not free from doubt, whether this verse is genuine or not.

Rantideva in the Meghadūta of the great poet Kālidāsa

The great poet Kālidāsa has also mentioned King Rantideva's glory in the prior part (Pūrva-megha) in a stanza, which is numbered as 45 in some editions and 48 or 49 in others. The text with the resolution of *sandhi* and English translation based on Shri M. R. Kale is quoted below :—

2 3 5 4 1
आराध्य एनम् शरवणभवम् देवम् उल्लङ्घिताध्वा
7 9 8 6
सिद्धद्वन्द्वैः जलकणभयात् वीणिभिः मुक्तमार्गः
10 16 15 11
व्यालम्बेथाः सुरभितनया आलम्भजाम् मानयिष्यन्
18 17 14 13 12
स्रोतोमूर्त्या भुवि परिणताम् रन्तिदेवस्य कीर्तिम्

(1. उल्लङ्घिताध्वा) When you have gone over some distance, (2. आराध्य) after having waited on (3. एनम् 4. देवम्) the God (5. शरवणभवम्) born of Śara reeds, (6. मुक्तमार्गः) your path being left (7. सिद्धद्वन्द्वैः) by the pairs of Siddhas (8. वीणिभिः) bearing lutes (in their hands) (9. जलकणभयात्) from fear of the drops of water,

(10. अवलम्बेथाः) you do hang down (and stop there) (11. मानयिष्यन्) to do honour (12. कीर्तिम्) to the glory (13. रन्तिदेवस्य) of Rantideva (14. परिणताम्) sprung (15. आलम्भजाम्) from ALAMBHA (16. सुरभितनया) of cows (dauthger of Surabhi) and (17. भुवि) appearing on earth (18. स्रोतोमूर्त्या) in the form of a river.

Mallinātha in his 'Saṁjīvanī' commentary on Meghadūta has interpreted the portion 'सुरभितनया आलम्भजाम् परिणताम् भुवि स्रोतोमूर्त्या' as follows :

पुरा किल राज्ञो रन्तिदेवस्य गवालम्भेष्वेकत्र
सम्भृताद्रक्तनिष्यन्दाच्चर्मराशेः काचिन्नदी सस्यन्दे ।
सा चर्मण्वतीत्याख्यायत इति ॥

meaning thereby that :

(पुरा) In ancient times (किल) verily (काचित्) a certain (नदी) river (स्यन्दे) streamed out (रक्तनिष्यन्दात्) of blood trickling down (चर्मराशेः) from the heaps of hide (सम्भृताद्) collected together (एकत्र) in one place (गवालम्भेषु) in the ālambha of cows (राज्ञो रन्तिदेवस्य) by King Rantideva. (सा) It (आख्यायत) became famous (चर्मण्वतीति) as Carmanvati.

The same portion has been commented upon by Madhava Shastri on page 18 of 'Kāvyasāra-saṅgraha' published by Sunderlal Jain, Punjab Sanskrit Pustakalaya, Lahore, 1929 as follows :

सुरभितनया—गावः, तासां आलम्भनं—प्रोक्षणं, ततो जातां—प्रसूतां, भुवि, च स्रोतोमूर्त्या—प्रवाहरूपेण, परिणतां—रूपान्तरं गताम् ।

The literal English translation of above would be as follows :

सुरभितनया—गावः Cow ; तासां their ; आलम्भनं—प्रोक्षणं sprinkling or spraying with water ; ततो therefrom ; जातां—प्रसूतां delivering ; भुवि on earth ; च and ; स्रोतोमूर्त्या—प्रवाह रूपेण in the form of a stream ; परिणतां—रूपान्तरं गताम् having been transformed ;

The running translation of the above would be as follows :

Sprinkling or spraying of cows with water delivered on earth and which has been transformed in the form of a stream.

Madhava Shastri has interpreted *ālambha* to mean *prokṣaṇa* that is sanctifying by means of water, which resulted in a stream. Sanctifying by sprinkling of water cannot result in a stream. The stream can only be possible if vast numbers of animals are sanctified by water spray bath. After such sanctifying he has also indicated killing of cows, which cannot be correct according to descriptions at several places in the Mahābhārata and also according to their larger context, but so far the word *ālambha* is concerned, he has not directly interepreted it to mean violence (see the caption "Meaning of *Ālabhyanta, Ālambha* etc." in this chapter). Any sane person considering the episode without any prejudice would arrive at the only conclusion that according to the description of King Rantideva at several places in the Mahābhārata and their respective contexts, violence by King Rantideva is not proved but gift of cows alone is proved which resulted in spreading his glory. (See the caption : 'True facts of King Rantideva's Glory as narrated in the Mahābhārata').

Killing of cow progeny is prohibited by Hindus as well as Christian scriptures. Muslim religion also prohibits beef eating. (See the caption 'Cow-slaughter—Hienous crime in Manusmṛti', 'Cow-slaughter—Hienous crime in Christianity' and 'Prohibition of Beaf-eating in Islam under 'Were Cow-slaughter, Meat-Sacrifice and Meat-eating Prevalent in the Vedic Age' ?). Therefore, no sane person will agree that heinous acts like cow-killing can be the cause of earning glory for King Rantideva. As such, the words *ālabhyanta* in the Mahābhārata and *Ālambha* in the Meghadūta of the great poet Kālidāsa cannot mean violence.

It is also worth noting that according to Mallinātha's commentary trickling of blood drops from the heap of hides resulted in a flow of a

river which is famous by the name Carmaṇvatī. The basis of this appears to be a verse of the 29th Chapter of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, which has been discussed earlier (see caption 'Possible Reasons for Naming of the River as Carmaṇvatī').

The readers may see that neither is there any mention of blood in the original text of the great poet Kālidāsa nor is there any justifiable basis in support of this. Such views of Mallinātha about the formation of the Carmaṇvatī river cannot be acceptable to any reasonable person.

Meanings of 'Ālabhyanta', 'Ālambha', etc.

In the Dhātupātha of Pāṇini's grammar, *ḍulabhaṣ prāptau* (डुलभष् प्राप्तौ) occurs as root number 975 in the first conjugation called 'bhvādi-gaṇa'. Its conjugated form in the present tense third person singular is *labhate* (लभते). Paṇini's grammar stands out pre-eminent amongst all treatises in the depth of its insight ; it supersedes all in importance and authoritativeness. According to this authentic work, the meaning of *labhate* (लभते) is none except the sense of 'obtaining' (प्राप्त करना). The science of grammar is vast—अनन्तपारं किल शब्दशास्त्रं. As such, to find out whether there is any other meaning of the root '*labh*', we looked into other references and found that '*labh*' also means प्रेरणा that is urging, inciting, direction, command etc. This has been accepted by the Maitrāyaṇi-saṁhitā, Sāyana-bhāṣya, Cāndra-Vyākaraṇa, Jainendra-Vyākarana, Kāśakṛtsna-Vyākaraṇa, Kātantra-Vyākaraṇa, Śākaṭāyana-Vyākarana and Hemacandra Vyākaraṇa also. The Varanaseya Sanskrit University of Varanasi, which is considered the seat of Sanskrit learning in India, has published a Dhatupāta-samīkṣā'. There too, we do not find the root '*labh*'in the meaning of violence '*hiṁsā*' by any stretch.

A Sanskrit scholar has stated :—

"Some time before Pāṇini, the root *lambh* had ceased to be used in its conjugated forms. Hence grammarians did not incorporate this root *lambh* in the Dhātupāṭha lists. The words derived from the

lambh were corelated to the root *labh*, and hence both the words *ālabha* and *ālambha* came to mean the same. In fact, the meanings of both the roots *labh* and *lambh*, as well as of their derivatives, are different. The root *labh* has two meanings : (1) obtaining, and (2) touching. Likewise, the root *lambh* also has two meanings : (1) killing and (2) touching. The word *ālabha* from the root *labh* and *ālambha* from the root *lambh* are synonymic in the sense of 'touching'. So much is certain that *ālabha* does not signify killing anywhere, and *ālambha* does not mean 'obtaining'.

The scholar does not cite a scriptural or historical proof in support of the above.

No dictionary gives the meaning of killing for *lambh*. In modern times no one has put in so much hard effort as European savants in Sanskrit studies and in researches into the semantics of Sanskrit words. Had any word carried the sense of killing, then it could not have escaped their researches, because an objective of European scholars was to bring out and propagate that Hindu scriptures enjoin killing (*hiṁsā*.)

Even according to all the meanings of the prefix *ā* found in the different dictionaries, the roots *labh* or *lambh* with this prefix, that is *ālabha* or *ālambha*, cannot signify 'killing'. Inspite, lexicographers have also given the meaning of killing both for *ālabha* and *ālambha*, which can be possible only in a conventional meaning. These lexicons also give for both the words the following meanings :

'to obtain, touch, take hold of, etc.'

which have nothing to do with killing. By virtue of their etymology *ālabha* and *ālambha* do not carry any meaning of killing, and as lexicons have still accepted 'killing' as their meaning, and as in some passages we come across the meaning of 'killing', in such a situation wherever these words occur, they should be rendered in a 'killing' or 'non-killing' meaning only after due consideration of the context.

In Yajurveda 30.5, the word *'ālabh'* means 'to obtain or receive', such as :

1. ब्रह्मणे ब्राह्मणं आलभते .. For knowledge he obtains a knower (a wise man).

2. क्षत्राय राजन्यं आलभते .. For heroism he obtains a hero.

3. नृत्ताय सूतं आलभते .. For dance he obtains a *sūta*.

4. धर्माय सभाचरं आलभते .. For *dharma* he receives a member of a religious congregation.

In the Smṛtris, Gṛhyasūtras, and allied texts *ālambhana* and *ālabhate* mean 'touching' ; for example :

(i) In the Subodhinī commentary on 'Mīmāṁsā-darśana' 2.3.17 it is stated : आलम्भः स्पर्शो भवति, that is *ālambha* is *sparśa* 'touching'.

(ii) In the duties of a Brahmacārī—

वर्जयेत् स्त्रीणां च प्रेक्षणालम्भम्

"the brahmacārī should avoid looking at a woman or touching her." (Manu 2.179).

(iii) In the Upanayana ceremony—

अथास्य (ब्रह्मचारिणः) दक्षिणांसं अधिहृदयं आलभते

"the teacher touches the heart of the brāhmacārī' (Pāraskara-gṛhyasūtra 2.2.16).

(iv) In the marriage ceremony—

वरो वध्वा दक्षिणांसम् अधिहृदयं आलभते

"the bridegroom touches the heart of the bride with his hand over her right shoulder". (Pāraskar-gṛhyasūtra 1.8.8) etc. etc.

(v) The Bhāgavata-Mahāpurāṇa 11.5.13 also clearly testifies that in *yajña*, *paśu-ālambhana* does not convey the meaning of 'killing' :—

यद् घ्राणभक्षो विहितः सुरायास्तथा पशोरालभनं न हिंसा।

(श्रीमद्भागवत ११.५.१३)

"In *yajña*, the smelling of wine is prescribed, not its drinking. In *yajña*, the touching of an animal is enjoined not its killing."

(vi) The word स्पर्श that is 'touching' is used for दान gift as well. The great poet Kālidāsa has गाः कोटिशः स्पर्शयता घटोघ्नीः in Raghuvaṁśa 2.49 where *sparśayatā* (स्पर्शयता) means *dānam* (दानं)—gift'.

It is customary even now a days that a donor has to touch the items of gift and then those items are passed on to the persons accepting those gifts. If the items or varieties of gifts are so many that it is not possible to touch them physically, then they are glanced over and thus touched by mere eye-sight.

Chapter 29 of the Śāntiparva (Rājadharma) of the Māhabhārata enumerates the names of kings who became famous by giving away cows in donation ; hence the context of the word *ālabhyanta* in आलभ्यन्त शतं गावः of verse 127 of Gītā Press and Chitrashala editions and verse 119 of the edition of Bhandarkar Research Institute, Poona, can mean only 'obtaining' (प्राप्ति) or 'touching (स्पर्श) in relation to the donation of cows. Similarly the meaning of the word *ālambha* in सुरभितनया आलम्भजां रन्तिदेवस्य कीर्तिम् of Pūrvamegha in the Meghadūta of the great poet Kālidāsa also relates to the donation of cows and not their killing.

IS BEEF POSSIBLE IN MADHUPARKA ?

Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra in his book 'Beef in Ancient India' and Pandurang Vaman Kane in his book 'History of Dharmasastra' Vol. II, Part I, Chapter 10 (Madhuparka and Other Usages) ; and Vol. II, Part II, Chapter 12 (Bhojana—Flesh-eating) have tried to prove that *madhuparka* contained meat and that too beef. Besides foreigners, a number of other Indian writers too have at times described and referred to it in their articles. Let us consider it.

Madhuparka in the Vedas

The famous Vedic scholar of modern times, the late Pandit Shripad Damodar Satavalekar writes in his *Go-Jñāna-Kośa*, Ancient Period, Vedic section, Part I :—

> "Several people say that the rite of *madhuparka* is Vedic and meat is its essential ingredient. But the word *madhuparka* itself is not found in the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda ; it is also not found in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads. It occurs only once in the Atharvaveda Saṁhitā. This mantra is :
>
> **यथा यशः सोमपीथे मधुपर्के यथा यशः ।** (Atharvaveda 10.3.21)
> "May I be blessed by the glory that dwells in the draught of *soma* and in *madhuparka*."

This is all that is found about *madhuparka* in all the four Saṁhitās of the Vedas. Therefore it is not possible to ascertain as to what should be the ingredients of *madhuparka*, and what not. But this is a fact that whosoever claim that meat is a necessary ingredient of *madhuparka*, their view point cannot be proved by the Vedic mantras. Beyond this, even in the Brāhmaṇas and Upaniṣads, no text has any mention of *madhuparka*. Therefore it is impossible to prove by Vedic testimony that meat is necessary in the Vedic *madhuparka*.

Although the word *madhuparka* is not found in the Vedas anywhere else, yet the word *madhupeya* (मधुपेय) occurs. This too can be taken as its synonym. This is a good, delicious i.e., sweet drink, as it appears from the following mantra of Ṛgveda 6.44.21 :—

वृषाऽसि देवो वृषभः पृथिव्या वृषा सिन्धूनां वृषभस्तियानाम् ।
वृष्णे त इन्दुर्वृषभ पीपाय स्वादू रसो मधुपेयो वराय ॥

(ऋग्वेद ६.४४.२१)

In the last quartet of this mantra we find the words (स्वादू रसो मधुपेयो). They mean 'sweet drink madhupeya'. But this is not any independent drink, it is the soma juice itself, to indicate which, the word *indu* is there in this very mantra. *Vṛṣā* (वृषा) *vṛṣabhaḥ* (वृषभः) in this mantra signify an 'ox'.

Seeing these words, many seem to have conjectured the meat of an ox as an ingredient of *madhupeya*. But this mantra is in praise of god Indra and it means : 'O, God Indra ! thou art the giver of strength to earth, heavens, rivers, moveable and immoveables, so come here at the time of drinking *madhu*." Though Mr. Griffith has translated it into English as : "Though art the 'bull' of earth, the 'bull' of heaven" ; the meaning here is not 'the bull' but 'the giver of strength',—this need not be explained to those who comprehend the meanings inherent in English words. If anyone insists that as the two words *vṛṣā* and *madhupeya* occur in this mantra, therefore meat of a bull is required in *madhuparka*, then his contention will not be credible because to thrust on the mantra a sense which is not therein—is not a learned person's work.

Following are the meanings of *vṛṣa* (वृष), *vṛṣabha* (वृषभ) and *vṛṣakarmā* (वृषकर्मा) found in the Sanskrit-English Dictionary of Monier-Williams :—

vṛṣa (वृष) — (i) A strong or a potent man ;

(ii) The chief of the class or any thing the most excellent or prominent or best of its kind.

vṛṣabha (वृषभ) — Bull (in Veda, epithet of various gods, as of Indra).

vṛṣakarmā (वृषकर्मा) — Doing manly deeds as Indra (Ṛgveda).

Thus it is proved that there is no mention of *madhuparka* in the Vedas except in one passage in the Atharvaveda. *Madhupeya* is mentioned in the Ṛgveda. The ingredients of *madhuparka* are not specified anywhere in the Vedas. The name only indicates that it is something sweet. Therefore it cannot be proved from the Vedas that there is any possibility of any type of meat in *madhuparka* according to the Vedas. Let us now consider as to what are the ingredients of *madhuparka* according to the other texts.

Ingredients of Madhuparka

Madhuparka has been prescribed for special honoured guests who have come from far-off places. Wherever the ingredients of *madhuparka* have been described in the scriptures, nowhere has meat been included in them. Curd, ghee, milk, honey and candy-sugar are the main constituents of *madhuparka*. Some have not taken all of them but mentioned only a few of them. In some sources, parched barley powder (*sattu*) has also been mentioned as one of the ingredients of *madhuparka*.

Now let us see what are the ingredients of *madhuparka* in the various texts :—

1. TANTRASĀRA (Chowkhambā Sanskrit Series, Varānasi November 1938, Chapter I, page 53) :

आज्यं दधिमधुमिश्रं मधुपर्कं विदुर्बुधाः ।

"Wise men prescribe the mixture of ghee, curd and honey in *madhuparka*."

The same has been quoted in Śabda-kalpadruma (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Varanasi, 1961, Part III, page 599, column 2) while explaining the word *madhuparka*.

2. At the same place in Śabda-kalpadruma in the meanings of *madhuparka*, the following has been quoted from the KĀLIKĀ-PURĀṆA, chapter 7

दधि सर्पिर्जलं क्षौद्रं सितैताभिस्तु पञ्चभिः ।
प्रोच्यते मधुपर्कस्तु सर्वदेवोपतुष्टये ॥

"Curd, ghee, milk, honey and candy-sugar—all these five constitute *madhuparka* which satisfies all the gods."

3. YĀJÑAVALKYA SAṀHITĀ by Brahma (Smṛti-sandarbha, first edition, part 4, page 2430, published by Mansukh Rai Mor, 5 Clive Row, Calcutta), chapter 8, stanza 202.

कांस्यपात्रे समायुक्तं दधिमधुघृतैर्युतम् ।
मधुपर्कः स विज्ञेया मित्रस्य त्वा प्रतीक्षणी ॥

"The preparation with curd, honey and ghee in a bronze vessel is called *madhuparka*."

4. ĀŚVALĀYANA-GṚHYA-SŪTRA 1.24.5.6

दधनि मध्वानीय, सर्पिर्वा मध्वलाभे ।

"One should mix curd and honey, and ghee if honey is not available."

5. PĀRASKARA-GṚHYA-SŪTRA chapter on marriage, 1.3.5

आहरन्ति विष्टरं पाद्यं पादार्थमुदकमर्घमाचमनीयं ।
मधुपर्कं दधिमधुघृतमपिहितं कांस्ये कांस्येन ॥

After describing other items in the first line, the ingredients of *madhuparka* have been detailed in the second line :
"*Madhuparka* is made of curd, honey and ghee in a bronze vessel covered with a bronze lid.

6. VĀRĀHA-GṚHYA-SŪTRA 12.4

कांस्ये चमसे वा सदध्नि मध्वासिच्य,
वर्षीयसा पिधायाचमनीय प्रथमैः प्रतिपद्यन्ते ।

"The celebrant should come for worship with mixture of honey and curd in a bronze vessel or in a *camasa* vessel shaped like the *praṇita* covered with a big lid, along with the sipping water."

7. ĀPASTAMBIYA-DHARMA-SŪTRA 2.4.8.8, 9

दधिमधुसंसृष्टं मधुपर्कः पयो वा मधुसंसृष्टम् । अभावे उदकम् ।

"*Madhuparka* should be prepared by mixing curd and honey or by mixing milk and honey, and if they are not available, water should be mixed with honey."

8. BAUDHĀYNA-GṚHYA-SŪTRA 1.2.10—13

In sutra 9, bringing of *madhu* has been described. In sūtras 10 to 13 the ingredients to be mixed with honey have been described as follows :

दधि पयो वा द्वितीयं स द्विवृत् ।

"if curd or milk is mixed with honey, it is called *dvivṛt* (द्विवृत्)"

घृतं तृतीयं वा त्रिवृत् ।

"if the third ingredient ghee is added, it is called *trivṛt* (त्रिवृत्)"

यद् द्वितीयं तच्चतुर्थं स चतुर्वृत् ।

"by mixing the second ingredient i.e. if firstly milk has been mixed then curd and if firstly curd has been mixed then by mixing milk, it is called *caturvṛt* (चतुर्वृत्)"

आपः पञ्चमीस्स पाङ्क्तः ।

"by mixing the fifth ingredient, i.e. water, it is called *pāṅkta* (पांक्तः)

9. JAIMNIYA-GṚHYA-SŪTRA 1.19

तयोर्दधि मधु संनिहिते भवतो, दध्ना चेद्
दधिमन्थोऽद्भिश्चेद् उदमन्थः, पयसा चेत् पयस्यः ।

"Curd and honey are mixed in it. With curd it is called *dadhimantha* (दधिमन्थ); with water it is termed *udamantha* (उदमन्थ) and with milk it is designated as *payasya* (पयस्य)"

10. HIRAṆYAKEŚI-GṚHYA-SŪTRA 1.12.10

The text of Hiraṇyakeśi-gṛhya-sūtra was neither available with any book seller nor in any library. But its evidence was found in the German book : 'Ritual Literatur Vedische Opfer und Zauber' by Alfred Hillebrandt, published by Verlag von Karl. J. Trubner, Strassburg, in 1897. It is cited below in the original German, with an interlinear English word-for-word translation :

Hierauf folgt die Darbietung des Spulwassers und des Madhuparka.
Hereafter follows the offering of rinsing water and of Madhuparka.

Dieser besteht nach Hiraṇyakeśi 1.12.10 aus drei
These comprise according to Hiraṇyakeśi 1.12.10 of three

oder funf Bestandteilen, namelich dadhi, madhu, ghṛta
or five components, namely curd, honey, ghee which can be

wozu noch āpaḥ und saktu's treten konnen
mixed with water and saktus (flour of barley, parched in hot sand)

According to Hiraṇyakeśi 1.12.10—firstly water should be offered for washing and then *madhuparka* which contains three or five

ingredients—curd, honey and ghee ; to which water and groats of barley meal (*saktu*) can be added.

11. Meanings of *madhuparka* in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, page 780—

(i) A mixture of honey ;

(ii) An offering of honey and milk ;

(iii) A respectful offering to a guest, or to the bridegroom on his arrival at the door of the father of the bride, sometimes consisting of equal parts of curd, honey and clarified butter.

At other places too wherever the ingredients of *madhuparka* have been detailed, what to talk of beef, there is not even the slightest indication of meat. When meat has nowhere been included in the ingredients of *madhuparka*, then how is it alleged that meat is essential in *madhuparka* or that there can be no *madhuparka* without meat. The most essential ingredient of *madhuparka* is honey, without which there can be no *madhuparka*. Only the Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra prescribes that ghee can be taken if honey is not available, nowhere else such a prescription has been made ; though other ingredients in place of milk, curd or ghee have been prescribed. Āpastambīya-dharma-sūtra has even prescribed that if neither milk nor curd is available, then *madhuparka* can be prepared by mixing honey in water. It is not understandable as to how the Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra has accepted *madhuparka* without honey when the name *madhuparka* itself indicates the essentiality of honey in it. There appears to be some transgression. It is probably due to a pressing occasion when some followers of Āśvalāyana must have ruled in a hurry that ghee could be mixed in place of honey when it is not available, to avoid inconvenience of waiting to the guest. From that very time onwards the followers of Āśvalāyana would have recognised the convention of mixing ghee in place of honey when it was not available. Whatever

it be, meat is not mentioned anywhere in the ingredients of *madhuparka*, inspite of ransacking searches.

The descriptions of the ingredients of *madhuparka* in the various scriptures prove that there is not even an inkling of meat in *madhuparka*. So it is firmly proved that *madhuparka* contains no meat. Whichever passages are referred to as prescribing meat in *madhuparka*, such as :

1. नामांसो मधुपर्को भवति भवति। (Āśvalāyana-Gṛhya-Sūtra 1.24.26)

2. न त्वेवामांसोऽर्घः स्यात्। (Pāraskara-Gṛhya-Sūtra 1,3.29)

3. मधुपर्के च यज्ञे च पितृदैवतकर्मणि।
अत्रैव पशवो हिंस्या नान्यत्रेत्यब्रवीन्मनुः (Manu 5.41)

will be discussed later on.

Impracticability of Beef in the Reception of a Guest with Madhuparka

The rites of receiving an honourable guest with *madhuparka* have been detailed in the Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sutra 1.24 and Pāraskara-gṛhya-sūtra 1.3. Only on the basis of these two gṛhya-sūtras, people opine that meat (beef) is essential in *madhuparka*. Let us now consider the possibility of meat in *madhuparka* according to the rites described in them.

The sequence of rites given in these gṛhya-sūtras is as follows :

1. Offering of a seat and its acceptance ;
2. Offering of water for washing the feet ;
3. Offering of *arghya* (अर्घ्य) and its acceptance ;
4. Offering of sipping water (*ācamanīya*) and its acceptance ;
5. Accepting *madhuparka*, mixing it with the thumb and third finger, sprinkling *madhuparka* in the four directions by these

very fingers, taking *madhuparka* thrice from its middle by these very fingers, and leaving the residue ;

6. Cleaning the mouth by sipping water.

The rites upto here are almost identical in the Āśvalāyana and Pāraskara-gṛhya-sūtras. Till this place there is no point for difference of opinion. Hereafter interpretations differ, which will be discussed separately according to both the gṛhya-sūtras in the forthcoming sections. Here it will suffice to point out that there is no mention of meat in the ingredients of *madhuparka*, nor is meat mentioned till the completion of the rite by cleansing the mouth with sipping water. When a guest arrives, all the rites in the chain of his honoured reception by *madhuparka* are performed one after the other in a regular sequence and without interruption. There is no waiting for any length of time. Therefore, it does not seem possible that a cow could be slaughtered instantaneously, her meat taken out, be cooked, be mixed with *madhuparka* and then it could be served to the guest. It takes a long time to slaughter a cow, to extract her meat and then to cook it. It does not seem possible that an honoured guest was required to wait for such a long time. The followers of Āśvalāyana do not let an honourable guest wait even for honey and hence accept ghee in its place.

Moreover, a guest cannot consume the entire meat of a cow. The quantity of *madhuparka* for the occasion can permit only a fraction of an ounce of meat in it. How can it be desirable to slaughter a cow for such a little quantity of meat ? Therefore, when a cow is brought after the guest has partaken of *madhuparka* and has cleansed his mouth by sipping water, her bringing in can be either for gifting her to the guest, or for offering instantaneously drawn milk to the guest for which he will not have to wait.

Gift of a Cow in Madhuparka

Some scriptures specifically prescribe that a cow should be gifted in *madhuparka*.

1. Aruṇa-smṛti, chapter 1, (published by Mansukhrai Mor, 5, Clive Row, Calcutta) :

यज्ञकर्मणि या धेनुर्या धेनुर्धर्मकर्मणि ॥ ११६ ॥
प्रायश्चित्तनिमित्ते वा होमार्थं दुर्बलाय वा ।
मधुपर्के च या धेनुः या धेनुः कर्मसिद्धये ॥ ११७ ॥
एताः सर्वा द्विजो विद्वान् प्रतिगृह्य यतस्ततः ।
न स पापेन लिप्येत पद्मपत्रमिवांभसा ॥ ११८ ॥

"As there is no effect of water on a lotus leaf, similarly sin does not effect a learned *dwija* who accepts a cow gifted at the time of a *yajña*, in a religious performance, on performing expiation rites, for offerings (*homa*), for regaining his lost health, in the rites of *madhuparka*, and on fulfilment of desire (*karma-siddhi*)."

2. Manu-smṛti 3.3 :

तं प्रतीतं स्वधर्मेण ब्रह्मदायहरं पितुः ।
स्रग्विणं तल्प आसीनमर्हयेत्प्रथमं गवा ॥

"Being justly applauded for his strict performance of his duty, and having received from his natural or spiritual father the sacred gift of the Vedas, let him on an elegant bed, decked with a garland of flowers, and let his father honour him before his nuptials with the present of a cow according to the *Madhuparka* rite." (translated by Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra in 'Beef in Ancient India')

Manu-smṛti 3.119, 120 prescribes that ordained person who has finished his studies should be honoured by *madhuparka* and Manu-smṛti 3.3 prescribes that a cow should be gifted to such an ordained one ; and in the succeeding stanzas he has been permitted to marry an auspicious girl. It is clear from this that an ordained *brahmacāri* should first be honoured with *madhuparka* along with an offer of a cow. Probably its reason is that one who has been physically weakened by the hard labours of studies and by performing the strict duties of a

brahmacārī should increase his vigour and regain his health by drinking cow's milk before marriage so that he may be able to carry on with married life without adverse effect.

3. The following sūtras of the Āpastamba-dharma-sūtra 2.4.8 are also indicative of the offering or gifting of a cow :

(i) गोमधुपर्कार्हो वेदाध्यायः

"One who studies the Vedas is eligible to a cow and *madhuparka*." (5)

(ii) आचार्यर्त्विक्स्नातको राजा वा धर्मयुक्तः श्वशुराय राज्ञ इति परिसंवत्सरादुपतिष्ठद्भ्यो गोमधुपर्कश्च—

"A teacher, priest, father-in-law, king—if they come once a year they should be offered a cow and *madhuparka*."

Immediately after these sûtras follows the enumeration of the ingredients of madhuparka :

दधि मधुसंसृष्टं मधुपर्कः पयो वा मधुसंसृष्टम् । अभावे उदकम् ॥

If the sense of a 'cow' would have been its beef, then it would have surely been included in the enumeration of ingredients. Evidently therefore, only the gifting of a cow is desired in these sutras.

Historical Examples of the Gift of a Cow with Madhuparka

Let us now look into the historical examples of *madhuparka*, wherein only the gift of a cow is mentioned and not serving its beef after immediate slaughter.

Vālmikiya Rāmāyana :

(a) When Śri Rāma went to Bharadvāja Muni, he (Bharadvāja Muni) gave a reception to Śri Rāma by offering *madhuparka* and a cow in gift.

तस्य तद् वचनं श्रुत्वा राजपुत्रस्य धीमतः ।
उपानयत धर्मात्मा गामर्घ्यमुदकं ततः ॥

(Ayodhyā-kānda 54.17)

meaning—Pious Bharadvāja Muni after hearing highly intellected Prince Śri Rāma, offered him water for washing feet and hands and then offered *arghya* (*madhuparka*) and also a cow in gift.

(b) On the arrival of Maharṣi Agastya and others Lord Śri Rāma also offered them *madhuparka* in reception along with a cow in gift.

दृष्ट्वा प्राप्तान् मुनींस्तांस्तु प्रत्युत्थाय कृताञ्जलिः ।
पाद्यार्घ्यादिभिरानर्च गां निवेद्य च सादरम् ॥

(Uttara-kānda 1.13)

meaning—On arrival of those great sages, Śri Rāma Candra got up and stood before them with folded hands and then worshipped them with high esteem by offering water for washing their feet and hands and by offering *arghya* (*madhuparka*) and a cow in gift to each of them.

Mahābhārata :

(a) When Śri Nārada presented himself in the assembly of King Yudhiṣṭhira, the King received him with *madhuparka* rite and with the gift of a cow.

गां चैव मधुपर्कं च सम्प्रदायार्घ्यमेव च ।
अर्चयामास रत्नैश्च सर्वकामैश्च धर्मवित् ॥

(Sabhā-parva 5.15)

meaning—The king, conversant with religious observances & duties, worshipped them in the prescribed manner by offering water (for washing feet and hands), *madhuparka* and a cow in gift and pleased them by fulfilling all their desires.

(b) When Lord Śri Kṛṣṇa arrived in the assembly of Kauravas, a cow was gifted to Him in His reception by *madhuparka* rites :

अथ गां मधुपर्कं चाप्युदकं च जनार्दने ।
उपजह्रुर्यथान्यायं धृतराष्ट्रपुरोहिताः ॥

(Udyoga-parva 89.19)

meaning—The priests of Dhṛtarāṣṭra presented water, *madhuparka* and a high breed cow for the reception of Bhagavān Janārdana.

(c) When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to Duryodhana's place, there too the gift of a cow with *madhuparka* is mentioned :—

तस्मिन् गां मधुपर्कं चाप्युदकं च जनार्दने ।
निवेदयामास तदा गृहान् राज्यं च कौरवः ॥

(Udyoga-parva 91.9,10)

meaning—Kururāja (Duryodhana) offered water, *madhuparka*, cow and his palace and kingdom on the occasion.

Srimad-Bhāgavata Mahāpurāna:

(a) When Akrūra arrived in Braja, Lord Kṛṣṇa received him with *madhuparka* rite and presented a cow in gift.

पृष्ट्वाथ स्वागतं तस्मै निवेद्य च वरासनम् ।
प्रक्षाल्य विधिवत् पादौ मधुपर्कार्हणमाहरत् ॥
निवेद्य गां चातिथये संवाह्य श्रान्तमादृतः ।
अन्नं बहुगुणं मेध्यं श्रद्धयोपाहरद् विभुः ॥

(Śrimad-Bhāgavata 10.38.38-39)

meaning—Then, enquiring about his safe arrival and giving him an excellent seat, Balarāma washed his feet with due ceremony and fetched (for him) an offering called *madhuparka* (consisting of honey, clarified butter and curds). Again, bestowing on the guest a cow and massaging him, weary as he was, the almighty Lord respectfully and with (great) reverence brought (for him) pure food endowed with manifold excellences.

(b) When Kauravas honoured Balarāma with *madhuparka* rite, there too, a cow was presented.

तं संगम्य यथान्यायं गामर्घ्यं च न्यवेदयन् ।
तेषां ये तत्प्रभावज्ञाः प्रणेमुः शिरसा बलम् ॥

(Śrimad Bhāgavata 10.68.19)

meaning—They received Balarāma with due honours and offered Him *arghya* and a cow ; and such of them as knew His greatness saluted Him with their heads (bent low).

(c) When Sudāmā visited Dvārakā, the reception to him included the gift of a cow, even though reception by *madhuparka* rites is not clearly specified :

धूपैः सुरभिभिर्मित्रं प्रदीपावलिभिर्मुदा ।
अर्चित्वाऽऽवेद्य ताम्बूलं गां च स्वागतमब्रवीत् ॥

(Śrimad Bhāgavata 10.80.22)

meaning—Having joyfully worshipped His friend with scented fumes and rows of lights, and offering him betel-leaf seasoned with catechu, lime, areca-nut parings and cloves etc. and a cow, the Lord greeted the Brāhmaṇa with sweet words.

(d) On his arrival at the place of Bahulāśva in Janakapura, when Lord Kṛṣṇa was given a reception with *madhuparka* rite, gift of a cow is very explicit :—

सकुटुम्बो वहन् मूर्ध्ना पूजयांचक्र ईश्वरान् ।
गन्धमाल्याम्बराकल्पधूपदीपार्घ्यगोवृषैः ॥

(Śrimad Bhāgavata 10.86.29)

meaning—King Bahulāśva sprinkled that all-purifying water on his head and on his relatives and worshipped the Lord as well as the divine sages by offering them sandal-paste, flowers, textiles, ornaments, scented fumes, lights, oblations of water, cow and oxen.

Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janma-khand :

(a) On the arrival of Garg Muni at the name-giving ceremony at Nanda Bhavan, he was offered cow alongwith madhuparka. (13.10)

पाद्यं गां मधुपर्कं च स्वर्णसिंहासनं ददौ । (१३.१०)

(b) When Uddhava reached Vṛndāvana and came to the house of Nanda, then Yasodā and Rohini welcomed him with madhuparka alongwith the offering of a cow. (92.13)

आसनं च जलं गां च मधुपर्कं ददौ मुदा । (९२.१३)

(c) When Garga went to Vasūdeva, then he (Vasūdeva) honoured him with madhuparka *and* the offering of a cow. (99.4)

मधुपर्कं कामधेनुं वह्नि शुद्धांशुकं तथा ।
दत्वा गन्धं पुष्पमाल्य पूजयामास भक्तितः ॥ (९९.४)

(d) When Lord Kṛṣṇa went to the Great Sage Sandipani for studies, then the Sage honoured him with madhuparka *and* a cow. (102.4)

ओमित्युक्त्वा मुनिश्रेष्ठः पूजयामास तं मुदा ।
मधुपर्क-प्राशनेन गवा वस्त्रेण चन्दनैः ॥ (१०२.४)

(e) King Bhismaka offered madhuparka *and* a cow in honour of Lord Kṛṣṇa. (107.93)

अर्घ्यं च प्रददौ तत्र दूर्वापुष्पजलान्वितम् ।
मधुपर्कं च सुरभिं सर्वाङ्गे गन्ध चन्दनम् ॥ (१०७.९३)

Several similar examples can be found in the other Purāṇas. But there is not a single instance, wherein beef or any other kind of meat

is served with *madhuparka*. Even at present, the meat eaters will not accept in *madhuparka* the raw meat obtained by slaughter of any animal on the spot.

Āśvalāyana-Gṛhya-Sūtra

Pandurang Vaman Kane in his book 'History of Dharmaśāstra' Vol. II, Part I, Chapter 10, page 543, lines 22-23 says—"the procedure of *madhuparka* is set out in the Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.24," which is correct. In the ingredients of *madhuparka* it prescribes a mixture of curd and honey and if honey is not available then ghee can be mixed. This has been described before. There is no difference of opinion regarding the subsequent rites described and in their interpretation. After partaking of *madhuparka* and rinsing the mouth with sipping water, the subsequent rites are described by Panduranga Vaman Kane as follows on page 545, lines 3-8 :

> "When he has sipped water, they announce to him the cow. Having muttered the words 'destroyed is my sin, my sin is destroyed', he says 'Om, do it', if he desired to have the cow killed ; if he is desirous of letting her go, he mutters the verse (Rig. VIII. 101, 15) the mother of Rudras and daughter of Vasus and says 'let her go'."

The original sūtras are :

आचन्तोदकाय गां वेदयन्ते ॥ २३ ॥
हतो मे पाप्मा मे हत इति जपित्वां कुरुतेति कारयिष्यन् ॥ २४ ॥

Its simple, straight-forward and word-to-word meaning is :

> "आचन्तोदकाय (When the mouth has been rinsed with sipping water) गां वेदयन्ते (a cow is gifted), मे (my) पाप्मा (sin) हतः (is destroyed) इति (thus) जपित्वा (uttering) ॐ (pronouncing Om) इति (thus he says) कुरुत (do it) कारयिष्यन् (if he wants to get it done).

In the contents of Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra with the commentary of Gargya Narayana published in 1893 by Jivanand Vidyasagar, No. 2, Ramanath Mazumdar Street, Calcutta, the heading of this 23rd sūtra has been given as आचन्तोदकाय गोदानम् which means 'gift of cow after rinsing mouth with sipping water', which has been interpreted by Pandurang Vaman Kane as 'they announce to him the cow'.

The meaning of the word *kuruta* (कुरुत) in the 24th sūtra has been taken by Pandurang Vaman Kane as 'do it' that is 'perform the duty that should be done' but it is not understandable wherefrom he has inserted later on 'if he desires to have it killed'. When the *madhuparka* has been taken, the mouth has been purified with sipping water, and the cow has been announced for gift, then the reply comes: 'I accept it' preceded by *Om*, the rite of gift be performed, and if it is not acceptable then the following sūtra prescribes that the mantra of Ṛgveda VIII.101.15 should be pronounced :

माता रुद्राणां दुहिता वसूनाम्—इति जपित्वोमुत्सृजतेत्युत्स्रक्ष्यन् ॥२५॥

"He mutters : 'The mother of Rudras and the daughter of Vasus' and says : 'Let her go' (to her place as I will not take her along). This mantra is also not suited to this context. We shall discuss it later. The sense 'if he desires to have the cow killed' is nowhere in the original sūtra. It is understandable that the cow was gifted* after all the rites of welcome were effected i.e. offering of water for washing the feet, offering scented water for cleaning hands, offering and acceptance of *madhuparka*, and the purification of mouth with sipping water but it is hard even to imagine her slaughter.

After it, Pandurang Vaman Kane writes on page 545, lines 8-9 : 'Let the *madhuparka* not be without flesh', which seems to be the meaning of the last sūtra of Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.24.

नामांसो मधुपर्को भवति भवति ॥२६॥

*See the prescriptions of Scriptures regarding it under the heading 'Gift of A Cow in Madhuparka'.

In the present day printed texts, this sūtra is found which is interpreted by the supporters of meat-eaters as '*Madhuparka* is not devoid of flesh'. The sandhi can be resolved in two ways, giving two interpretations ; (1) *Madhuparka* is never devoid of flesh ; and (2) *Madhuparka* is never with flesh, which will be discussed in details later on. '*Madhuparka* is never devoid of flesh' is not relevant.

In the *madhuparka* rite, curd and honey or curd and ghee have been prescribed as its ingredients and there is not even an inkling of flesh. After the rite of *madhuparka* has been completed, which means that after the mouth has been rinsed with sipping water taking *madhuparka* and if then the guest mutters *Om* and says 'kill it' and 'the *madhuparka* is not without flesh'—these things can neither be reconciled because of the sequence of their occurrence and nor are they correct as a matter of principle. If flesh would have been essential in *madhuparka*, then it would have been mentioned among the ingredients of *madhuparka* and the announcement of the offering of the cow would have been before the offering and acceptance of *madhuparka* and if the guest would have had a longing for *madhuparka* with flesh, he would have muttered *Om* and said 'do (kill) it' before accepting *madhuparka*. Then *madhuparka* would have been prepared, offered, accepted and the mouth rinsed with sipping water. Therefore, it is certain that the announcement of the offering of cow is only for gift and if the guest does not like to take along the cow, he can say 'let her go to her place, I will not take her'. It is impossible to fancy the presence of flesh in *madhuparka*, because when a guest who has already arrived at one's door has to be honoured, there is not so much scope of time that a cow be slaughtered, her flesh extracted and then it be cooked. Therefore, the fancy that '*Madhuparka* is never without meat' is entirely unjustfied and improper. It cannot be conceded that such a point would not have occurred to a jurist of the stature of Pandurang Vaman Kane (M.A., LL.M., Advocate). It is a different thing that he should knowingly close his eyes to it with some other end in view and that he should try to conceal it even from other people for the attainment of his objective.

Let us now consider Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.24.25 which is incongruent and which we had promised to discuss later on :

माता रुद्राणां दुहिता वसूनाम्—इति जपित्वोमुत्सृजतेत्युत्स्रक्ष्यन् ॥२५॥

It means that the leaving or taking away of the cow may be permitted by uttering the mantra '*mātā rudrāṇām* ....'. This is the Ṛgved mantra VIII.101.15 and its full text is as follows :

माता रुद्राणां दुहिता वसूनां स्वसादित्यानाममृतस्य नाभिः ।
प्र नु वोचं चिकितुषे जनाय मा गामनागां अदितिं वधिष्ट ॥

Its word-to-word meaning is :

रुद्राणां माता (mother of the brave Maruts who make the enemies wail), वसूनां दुहिता (the daughter of Vasus), आदित्यानां स्वसा (sister of the sons of Aditi) and अमृतस्य नाभिः (the focal point of ambrosia is the cow, therefore) चिकितुषे जनाय (to the wise man) प्र वोचं नु (I announce) मा वधिष्ट (do not kill) अनागां अदितिं गां (the innocent and inviolable cow). Here *aditi* has double meaning—one which has been given above and the other अदनात् अदितिः i.e., one who produces consumables like milk, curd, butter ghee etc. Both the meanings are appropriate and acceptable. मां गां वधिष्ट (do not kill the cow—this is injunction of the Veda contained in this mantra. (See *Go-jñāna-kośa*, Ancient Section, Vedic Age, Part I, page 3 edited by Pt. Shripad Damodar Satavalekar).

How impossible a conjecture it is and in total contradiction to the injunction of the above Vedic mantra that after the completion of the rites of *madhuparka*, the guest by muttering the sacred *Om* should say : do it (kill it) if he (the honoured guest, who has been offered *madhuparka* and who has completed the *madhuparka* ceremony) desires to have the cow killed. Then imagine how improbable it is to mention that नामांसो मधुपर्को भवति (the *madhuparka* is never without meat) when the *madhuparka* rites have been completed without meat.

Besides the above reasons, another point deserves consideration, i.e., when the *madhuparka* rites have been completed, is it desirable

to feed uncooked meat of an instantaneously slaughtered cow to the guest ? Even if it is accepted that the cow is killed then and there and that uncooked flesh is served, then has it to be enquired from an honoured guest whether he will eat a certain thing or not ? Whatever is the best, is put before an honoured guest and it is up to him to accept it if he so desires or to leave it if he does not relish it.

Furthermore, even at present, people who take meat, never like the heinous act of slaughtering an animal in their presence. Slaughtering is done only where they cannot witness it and thence meat comes for the consumption of these meat-eating people belonging to a civilised society. Then how can one imagine something contradictory to this generality and that too about the great saints and sages dwelling in the forests ?

Therefore, if the meaning of Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.24.26 नामांसो मधुपर्को भवति be taken as 'there is no *madhuparka* without animal flesh', then it will be contrary to the context and because of its being unsuitable, it can never be relevant to the sense. Therefore, it will have to be accepted as an interpolation. Other interpretations of this sūtra are given below :—

1. In नामांसो मधुपर्को भवति the *sandhi* of नामांसो can also be resolved as न+आमांसो. By resolution in this manner, the prefix आ in आमांसो may be taken in the following sense according to Amarakośa 3.3.239 :

   आङीषदर्थेऽभिव्याप्तौ सीमार्थे धातुयोगजे । Its breaking of words is आङ् ईषत् अर्थे अभिव्याप्तौ सीमा-अर्थे धातुयोगजे । It means that the prefix आ is used in the senses of little, pervading, limitation and addition to the root.

   The meaning of आमांसो of नामांसो मधुपर्को भवति will be 'pervaded with flesh' and its sense comes to 'containing flesh' only. The whole sūtra will mean मधुपर्को आमांसो न भवति '*madhuparka* is not pervaded with—not containing i.e., devoid of flesh'.

This clarifies and removes any misapprehension that the cow was brought for killing. So it is explicitly pointed out that *madhuparka* is never with meat. The bringing in of the cow is not for slaughter, but for offering or gifting away. If the guest desires to take away the gifted cow he says 'Om, do it' and if he does not want to take her away, he says 'let her go'.

2. Pandit Dinanath Sastri, in his book 'Sanātana-Dharmālok' Vol. 6, pages 337-338, has interpreted the word *māṁsa* (मांस) in relation to *madhuparka* as under :

"The above-stated ingredients of *madhuparka* should be (मांसल) i.e. rich in fats, nourishing and should not be devoid of substance. To the word *māṁsa* (मांस), has been suffixed in accordance with अर्श आदिभ्योऽच् (Aṣṭādhyāyī 5.2.127) in the sense of 'with, together' and it gives the meaning of 'rich in fats'.

This meaning is also relevant to the present context. In practice it means that the milk and curd used in *madhuparka* should not be that from which butter or cream has been extracted. Milk or curd from which butter, cream has been extracted will neither be rich in fats, nor delicious and tasty, nor well nourishing, rather it will be devoid of substance. Only good things should be used for an honoured guest and not things devoid of substance.

3. Pandit Madhavacharya Sastri has interpreted the word *māṁsa* (मांस) on page 39 of the 'Removal of Doubts' Number (शङ्का समाधान अङ्क) of his monthly magazine 'Lokālok' (published by Madhava Pustakalaya, Dharmadham, Kamla Nagar, Delhi-7). There he says that in the context of *madhuparka*, *māṁsa* (मांस) means the fleshy part of fruits, kernels of dry fruits like almonds etc., fresh newly milked warm milk, or substantial milkproducts thickened by boiling and sweetened like रबड़ी, खोया, सिखरन etc. This meaning is also not irrelevant as it is not contradictory to principles. Incongruence, if any, is that fruits, etc. are not mentioned anywhere in the ingredients of *madhuparka*, but curd and milk do figure among the ingredients and newly-milked fresh warm milk of a cow is desirable to remove the fatigue of the honoured guest.

These discussions make it clear that there is no place even for any surmise of animal-flesh in *madhuparka*.

Pāraskara-Gṛhya-Sūtra

In continuance of the aforesaid description of the rites, the cow is mentioned only after *madhuparka* has been taken and the mouth has been purified with sipping water. Mention of a cow after the *madhuparka* has been taken, clearly indicates that there is no possibility of beef in *madhuparka*.

Mr. E. W. Hopkins writes about *madhuparka* in the "Cambridge History of India" Vol. 1 Chapter 10, page 208 (second edition, 1962, published by S. Chand & Co., Delhi) :—

"But it is an old rite of hospitality to kill a cow for a guest and as a matter of form, each honoured guest is actually offered a cow."

Mr. E. W. Hopkins further continues :—

"The host says to the guest, holding the knife ready to slay the cow that he has the cow for him but the guest is directed to say—"Mother of Rudras, daughter of Vasus, sister of Adityas, Navel of immortality (is she), do not kill the guiltless cow ; she is (earth itself), Aditi the goddess." I speak to them that understand. He adds, "My sin has been killed and that of so and so, let her go and eat grass." But if he really wants to have her eaten, he says, "I kill my sin and the sin of so and so, (in killing her)", and though in many cases, the offer of the cow is thus plainly a formal piece of etiquette, yet the offering to the guest was not complete without flesh of some sort ; and it is clear from the formulas, any of the worthiest guests might demand cow's death."

Such a statement seems to be based on Pāraskara-gṛhya-sūtra 1.3.26 which reads :

आचान्तोदकाय शासमादाय गौरिति त्रिः प्राह ॥

It means that after the guest has taken *madhuparka* and rinsed his mouth with sipping water, holding the *śāsa* (शास) the host says

thrice : 'this cow is (for you)'. There is no such word in the original text which refers to killing or slaughtering. It seems that Mr. E. W. *Hopkins* has taken the meaning of शासं आदाय as 'holding the knife ready to slay the cow'.

In Yājñavalkyāsaṁhitā as told by Brahmā 8.212 (Smṛti-Sandarbha part 4, published by Mansukh Rai Mor, 5-Clive Row, Calcutta, first edition) the meaning of *śāsa* (शास) has been given आचान्तः शासमादाय शासं शासनं उच्यते i.e. after cleaning the mouth with sipping water, the meaning of holding a *śāsa* (शास) is "to control with a *śāsa* (शास)".

The meaning of the word शासं is to control by the use of some object. Here a cow is brought for a guest who has just arrived and this cow is intended only to be gifted (see the heading 'Gift of a Cow in *Madhuparka*'). The nature of a cow is that she does not easily go to the house of a new owner from that of her previous owner. Even nowadays it is seen that if a cow is sent to a new place then she returns to the place of her old owner at the end of the day while returning after grazing in the forest and it is only with some efforts that she gets accustomed to and intimate with new owner. In such efforts one may sometimes have to control the cow by the fear of a stick or a rod. Likewise it has been said that a stick or a rod should be held in one's hand to keep the cow under control so that she does not back at going with a new guest. It is not said here that one should hold a knife in hand to kill the cow. It is not understandable as to wherefrom Mr. E. W. Hopkins has brought the meaning 'holding the knife ready to slay the cow' when in the original text there is no indication of slaying or slaughtering.

In Monier Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary the meanings of the root *śās* (शास्) have been given as under :

to chastise ;	to correct ;	to censure ;	to punish ;
to restrain ;	to control ;	to rule ;	to govern ;
to administer the law ;	to command ;	to direct ;	to bid ;
to order ;	to teach, etc.		

Pāraskara-Gṛhya-Sūtra

The verbal noun from the root *śās* (शास) has the form शासं in the accusative singular which means 'to an object of controlling'. With reference to one whom the Government has sentenced to death, the meaning of the word शासं can be taken as a knife or a sword, but here the meaning 'knife' or 'sword' does not fit-in.

The meaning of Pāraskara-gṛhya-sūtra 1.3 :

प्रत्याह। माता रुद्राणां दुहिता वसूनां स्वसादित्यानाममृतस्य नाभिः। प्रनुवोचञ्चिकितुषे जनाय मागामनागामदितिं वधिष्ट। मम चामुष्य च पाप्मानं हनोमीति यद्यालभेत ॥२७॥ अथ यद्युत्सिसृक्षेन्मम चामुष्य च पाप्मा हत ॐ उत्सृजत तृणान्यत्त्विति ब्रूयात् ॥२८॥ न त्वेवामांसोऽर्घः स्यात् २९॥

is almost the same as that of Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.24 :

हतो मे पाप्मा पाप्मा मे हत इति जपित्वोँ कुरुतेति कारयिष्यन् ॥२४॥ माता रुद्राणां दुहिता वसूनामिति जपित्वोमुत्सृजतेत्युत्स्रक्ष्यन् ॥२५॥ नामांसो मधुपर्को भवति भवति ॥२६॥

which has already been considered under the heading 'Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra'. Only the 28th sūtra is slightly different, whose simple and straight-forward meaning is given hereunder for the information of our readers, wherein the mention of 'leaving the cow for grazing' also proves that the cow was meant for gifting. The meaning of 28th sūtra is :

> (अथ यदि) If (उत्सिसृक्षेत्) he desires to leave her (ब्रूयात्) he should say—(मम च) mine and (अमुष्य च) his i.e. host's पाप्मा sin (हतः) has ended, (ओम् उत्सृजत) yes, leave her, (तृणानि अत्तु) let her graze.

The meaning of नत्वेवामांसोऽर्घ्यः स्यात्) the 29th sūtra of the Pāraskara-gṛhya-sūtra can be taken in two ways like that of नामांसो मधुपर्को भवति—

(1) न तु एव अमांसो अर्घ्यः स्यात्

(2) न तु एव आमांसो अर्घ्यः स्यात्

The meaning in the first case is : '*Madhuparka* (अर्घ्यः) is never devoid of flesh (अमांसः)', while in the second case the meaning is : '*Madhuparka* (अर्घ्यं) never contains flesh (अमांसः)'. The coherence and incoherence of both these renderings together with the meaning of *māṁsa* (मांस) as fleshy fruit have been discussed under Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra.

Vasiṣṭha-Dharma-Sūtra, Śāṅkhāyana-Gṛhya-Sūtra

Pandurang Vaman Kane writes in his 'History of Dharmaśāstra', Vol. 2, Part II, Chapter 22, 'Bhojana and Flesh-eating', on page 778, lines 22-24 :

> "Manu (V. 27-44) at first contains a permission to kill animals only in *Madhuparka*, in sacrifice (*yajña*) and in rites for gods and manes and on no other occasion. This is same as Vasiṣṭha IV.6, Viṣṇu-dharma-sūtra 51.64, Śāṅkhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra II.16.1. (Śāṅkhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra reads सोमे for यज्ञे)."

In the extant Manusmṛti, meat in *madhuparka* has been mentioned only in 5.41 which has been considered under the heading "Manu-smṛti." The very same text is also found in the extant Vasiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra (Vasiṣṭha-dharmaśāstra or Vasiṣṭha-smṛti) 4.6 and in Śāṅkhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 2.16.1 :

मधुपर्के च यज्ञे च पितृदैवतकर्मणि ।
अत्रैव च पशुं हिंस्यान्नान्यथेत्यब्रवीन्मनुः ॥

It has not been separately and specifically prescribed in the Vasiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra or the Śankhāyan-gṛhya-sūtra that animal-slaughter is permitted in *madhuparka*, *yajña* and rites of the manes and gods and nowhere else ; but it has been quoted in passing as an opinion of Manu.

As has been proved under the heading 'Manu-smṛti', the above-mentioned stanza cannot be that of the Manu-smṛti 5.41. Moreover an independent prescription of this intent is found nowhere else in the Manu-smṛti. Therefore, it is also proved that the citing of

such a stanza from the Vasiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra or Śāṅkhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra or from another scriptural text by Pandurang Vaman Kane is not genuine but imaginary and spurious, specially when such a specific prescription is not available elsewhere in the Manu-smṛti.

In the fourth chapter of the Vasiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra, the seventh stanza after the sixth one reads :

नाकृत्वा प्राणिनां हिंसा मांसमुत्पद्यते क्वचित् ।
न च प्राणिवधः स्वर्ग्यस्तस्माद्यागे वधोऽवधः ॥

This stanza tallies with Manu-smṛti 5.48 ; only the fourth quartet differs. Here it is तस्माद्यागे वधो वधः which means that 'violence in a *yajña* is considered non-violence', while the Manu-smṛti reads तस्मान्मांसं विवर्जयेत् which means 'therefore, one should avoid meat'. The text of this stanza of the Manu-smṛti is valid by virtue of its being in conformity with the Vedas ; and the reading of Vasiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra is invalid being against the Vedas.

Baudhāyana-Gṛhya-Sūtra

Pandurang Vaman Kane, in his book 'History of Dharma-śāstra', Vol. 2 Part I, chapter 10, Madhuparka & other Usages' page 545, lines 32-37, writes :—

> "The Baudhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra says (1.2.51-54) that when the cow is let off, the flesh of a goat or ram may be offered, or some forest flesh (of a deer etc.) may be offered, as there can be no *madhuparka* without flesh or if one is unable to offer flesh, one may cook ground grain."

The original reading of these Sūtras is as under :—

तस्यामुत्सृष्टायां मेषमजं वाऽऽलभते ॥५१॥ आरण्येन वा मांसेन ॥५२॥
न त्वेवामांसोऽर्घ्यः स्यात् ॥५३॥ अशक्तौ पिष्टान्नं संसिद्धयेत् ॥५४॥

According to the Baudhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra, honey, curd, milk, ghee and water—only these five are the ingredients of *madhuparka*. It has been discussed already that meat has not been mentioned in the ingredients of *madhuparka*, neither there is any scope for serving meat after slaughtering an animal within the time for the rites of welcoming a guest (it takes even more time in bringing the meat of a wild animal, like deer etc. after hunting it), and nor is meat desirable according to the principle. Therefore, the contention that *madhuparka* is not without meat is incorrect and unfounded. If there can be no *madhuparka* without meat, then why a prescription of offering 'cooked ground grain'? This affirms that the contention that '*madhuparka* cannot be without meat' is not true.

Mānava-Gṛhya-Sūtra

Pandurang Vaman Kane, in his 'History of Dharma-śāstra' Vol. 2, part I, chapter 10, 'Madhuparka & other Usages', page 545, lines 28-31, writes :

> "Mānava-gṛhya-sūtra 19.2.2 says that the Veda declares that the *Madhuparka* must not be without flesh and so it recommends that if the cow is let loose, goat's meat or Pāyasa (rice cooked in milk) may be offered."

The original sūtra reads :—

पश्वङ्गं पायसं वा कारयेत् नामांसो मधुपर्कों इति श्रुतिः ॥

Shri Bhimsen Sharma, editor of the monthly 'Brāhmaṇa-sarvasva' (published by Satyavrata Sharma Dvivedi, printed by Veda Prakasha Press, available from Sanatana Dharma Pustakalaya, Etawah, pages 19-20) has translated it into Hindi, which can be rendered into English as follows :

> "One should offer *madhuparka* with milk-rice pudding (*pāyasa*) which is symbolic of cattle ; as milk is a part or product of cattle, they are casually present therein. It is written in Śruti that *madhuparka* is not without meat, so when milk-rice pudding has been prepared and milk being part of cattle, words of the Śruti are fulfilled."

Under the heading '*Madhuparka* in the Vedas' on page 94 it has already been pointed out that according to Pandit Shripad Damodar Satavalekar even the word *madhuparka* is not found in the Vedas. The author or commentator of Mānava-gṛhya-sūtra has not quoted any Vedic mantra ; therefore, it is not a fact that the Vedas mention that there is no *madhuparka* without meat. If *māṁsa* (मांस) is interpreted to be a pudding (पायस) prepared by admixing milk obtained from cattle and rice, then this will not be acceptable to the propagators of meat and if they accept it then we have no objection because it involves no violence. Even in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 11.7.1.3 meat (*māṁsa*) has been termed *paramānna* परमान्न—(एतद् ह वै परमन्नाद्यन्मांसम्) and according to Amarakośa 2.7.24 *paramanna* परमान्न is a synonym of *pāyasa* पायस or a pudding of milk and rice with sugar added to it (परमान्नं तु पायसम्). But it takes time in preparing a milk-rice pudding (*pāyasa*). Such a scope of time does not exist in the *madhuparka* rites ; and therefore, it seems more appropriate that instead of milk-rice pudding (*pāyasa*) fresh warm milk was served. In the original text of the Mānava-gṛhya-sūtra, there is no mention of the meat of a he-goat as alleged by Pandurang Vaman Kane, and wherefrom he has got this he alone knows.

Manu-Smṛti

On page 6 of his afore-mentioned 'Beef in Ancient India' Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra mentions :

> "Being justly applauded for his strict performance of his duty, and having received from his natural or spiritual father the sacred gift of the Vedas, let him on an elegant bed, decked with a garland of flowers, and let his father honour him, before his nuptials, with the present of a cow, according to the *madhuparka* rite."

There is no difference of opinion here. Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra writes further :

> "In a subsequent passage (Manu III.119-120) he (Manu) recommends the *madhuparka* or the 'honeyed meal' with

beef for the reception of kings and other great dignitaries."

The stanzas of Manu-smṛti (3.119-120) read :

राजर्त्विक्स्नातकगुरून्प्रियश्वशुरमातुलान् ।
अर्हयेन्मधुपर्केण परिसंवत्सरात्पुनः ॥
राजा च श्रोत्रियश्चैव यज्ञकर्मण्युपस्थितौ ।
मधुपर्केण संपूज्यौ न त्वयज्ञ इति स्थितिः ॥

In the above first stanza it has been said that a king, priest, graduate teacher, son-in-law, father-in-law and maternal uncle should be honoured by *madhuparka* if they come once a year. In the second stanza it has been said that a king and a scholar of Vedas should be honoured by *madhuparka* whenever they are present at the performance of *yajña*. In both these stanzas honouring by *madhuparka* has been mentioned, but there is no inkling of beef anywhere in them. We are at a loss to understand wherefrom Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra or others, whosoever they may be, scent beef in these stanza while citing them.

On page 29 of the same book, Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra writes :

"Āśvalāyana emphatically ordains that no *Madhuparka* should be celebrated without flesh."

This has already been discussed at length under the heading 'Ingredients of Madhuparka', 'Practicability of Beef in Reception of Guest with Madhuparka' and 'Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra'.

Pandurang Vaman Kane writes in his 'History of Dharma-śāstra', Vol. 2, Part 2, Chapter 22 'Bhojana and Flesh-eating' :

"Manu (V.41) contains a permission to kill animals only in *madhuparka* and in sacrifice (*yajña*) and rites for gods and manes and no other occasions."

The text of the above-mentioned stanza in the Manu-smṛti editions available now-a-days reads :—

मधुपर्के च यज्ञे च पितृदैवतकर्मणि ।
अत्रैव पशवो हिंस्या नान्यत्रेत्यब्रवीन्मनुः ॥ (मनु० ५.४१)

The meaning of this stanza is : "An animal can be slain on the occasions of *madhuparka*, *yajña*, rites for the manes and gods and nowhere else—this has been said by Manu."

The final words of this stanza इत्यब्रवीन्मनुः (इति अब्रवीत् मनुः)—'this has been said by Manu' are indicative of the fact that this stanza as a whole does not belong to the Manu-smṛti. All the injunctions given in the Manu-smṛti are by Manu and as such it is not necessary to specify that this has been said by Manu. If Manu's injunctions are quoted in another work, then it can be specified that thus it has been said by Manu—Manu has thus ordained. This also goes to prove that this injunction does not form an integral part of the Manu-smṛti as propounded by Manu.

It seems that the above quoted stanza is the basis for the following attribution in the Cambridge History of India, Vol. I Chapter X (by E. W. Hopkins), page 208, (2nd edition of 1962, published by S. Chand & Co., Delhi) :

"The general rule in this regard is that attributed to Manu—'Animals may be killed (so said Manu) at the *Madhuparka* and *soma* sacrifice (*yajña*) and at the rite for manes and gods."

As proved on the basis of arguments given above, this stanza should not belong to the Manu-smṛti and hence this statement is also baseless.

The aforesaid stanza 5.41 of the Manu-smṛti is not authentic, as is proved by the statement made by Bhiṣma-pitāmaha while preaching duties to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. The stanza reads as follows in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata :

सर्वकर्मस्वहिंसा हि धर्मात्मा मनुरब्रवीत् ।
कामकाराद् विहिंसन्ति बहिर्वेद्यां पशून् नराः ॥
(Gitapress 265.5 ; Bhandarkar 257.5)

meaning—Holy Manu has prescribed *ahiṁsā* (non-violence) only in all performances. Out of their selfish desires, i.e. induced by the desire of eating meat and pretending that slaying of animals in *yajña* is not *hiṁsā* (violence), people slaughter animals on the outer altar of the *yajña*."

In the same fifth Chapter of Manu-smṛti, the 27th stanza reads :

प्रोक्षितं भक्षयेन्मांसं ब्राह्मणानां च काम्यया ।
यथाविधि नियुक्तस्तु प्राणानामेव चात्यये ॥

Its correct word-to-word meaning in prose order is as under : (प्राणानाम् अत्यये) At the time of impending death (एव) only (i.e. only when death is imminent and under no other circumstance), (च) and (ब्राह्मणानाम् काम्यया) at the desire of—by the permission of Brahmanas (i.e. the Brahmanas feel that it is essential for the person to live, then only), (नियुक्तस्तु) directed (यथाविधि) according to the rites, (भक्षयेत्) one may take (मांस) meat (प्रोक्षितं) which has been sanctified (but under no other circumstance or in no other way)."

It is clear that meat can be taken by those, whose death is imminent and who do not want to give up life, as on the non-availability of cereals during famine or in some fatal disease when no other cure is possible, but in no other circumstances is the taking of meat prescribed. According to this prescription of Manu also, meat is not possible in *madhuparka*.

The following stanzas are also from the fifth Chapter of Manu-smṛti :

योऽहिंसकानि भूतानि हिनस्त्यात्मसुखेच्छया ।
स जीवंश्च मृतश्चैव न क्वचित्सुखमेधते ॥४५॥

"He who slays innoxious beings with the intention of one's own pleasure, attains happiness neither in this world nor in the world hereafter." (45)

यो बन्धनवधक्लेशान्प्राणिनां न चिकीर्षति ।
स सर्वस्य हितप्रेप्सुः सुखमत्यन्तमश्नुते ॥४६॥

"He who does not seek to keep the animals under detention, to slay or to cause suffering to them, and who desires the good of all, attains endless bliss." (46)

यद्ध्यायति यत्कुरुते धृतिं बध्नाति यत्र च ।
तदवाप्नोत्ययत्नेन यो हिनस्ति न किंचन ॥४७॥

"He who does not injure or slay anyone, whatever he wants, whatever he thinks of, whatsoever he fixes his mind on, he attains all that without any effort." (47)

नाकृत्वा प्राणिनां हिंसा मांसमुत्पद्यते क्वचित् ।
न च प्राणिवधः स्वर्ग्यस्तस्मान्मांसं विवर्जयेत् ॥४८॥

"Flesh can never be obtained without slaughtering a living creature. As animal-slaughter cannot cause attainment of heaven, so one should abstain from meat." (48)

समुत्पत्तिं च मांसस्य वधबन्धौ च देहिनाम् ।
प्रसमीक्ष्य निवर्तेत सर्वमांसस्य भक्षणात् ॥४९॥

"One should abstain from eating all kinds of flesh having well considered the origin of flesh and the cruelty of fettering and slaying animals." (49)

न भक्षयति यो मांसं विधिं हित्वा पिशाचवत् ।
स लोके प्रियतां याति व्याधिभिश्च न पीड्यते ॥५०॥

"(यः) He who (न भक्षयति) does not eat (मांसं) meat (हित्वा) disregarding (विधिं) the rule of (what is eatable and what is not) like a (पिशाच) *piśāca*, that is, a person who does not follow the *piśācas* who disregard all the rules of what is to be

eaten and what is not to be eaten. (स) he (प्रियतां याति) becomes dear (लोके) to all (च) and (न) he is not (पीड्यते) tormented (व्याधिभिः) by diseases. (50)

अनुमन्ता विशसिता निहन्ता क्रयविक्रयी ।
संस्कर्ता चोपहर्ता च खादकश्चेति घातकाः ॥५१॥

"He who permits slaughter, he who cuts it into bits, he who kills it, he who buys or sells it, he who cooks it, he who serves it, and he who eats it—all these are slayers (butchers)." (51)

वर्षे वर्षेऽश्वमेधेन यो यजेत शतं समाः ।
मांसानि च न खादेद्यस्तयोः पुण्यफलं समम् ॥५३॥

"He who performs an Āśvamedha *yajña* annually during a hundred years and he who does not take meat altogether, both obtains the similar reward for their respective merits." (53)

फलमूलाशनैर्मेध्यैर्मुन्यन्नानां च भोजनैः ।
न तत्फलमवाप्नोति यन्मांसपरिवर्जनात् ॥५४॥

"By taking fruits and roots and the food fit for ascetics, one does not gain the reward which is attained by entirely giving up meat." (54)

मां स भक्षयिताऽमुत्र यस्य मांसमिहाद्म्यहम् ।
एतन्मांसस्य मांसत्वं प्रवदन्ति मनीषिणः ॥५५॥*

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*ये त्वनेवंविदोऽसन्तः स्तब्धाः सदभिमानिनः ।
पशून् द्रुह्यन्ति विस्रब्धाः प्रेत्य खादन्ति ते च तान् ॥
(श्रीमद्भागवत ११.५.१४)

"Those who are ignorant of this real *dharma* and, though wicked and haughty, account themselves virtuous, kill animals without any feeling of remorse or fear of punishment, and are devoured by those very animals in their next birth. (Śrimad Bhāgavata XI.5.14)

"Me (मां) he (सः) will eat in the next world, whose meat I am eating in this (life). This is the real meaning of the word *māṁ-sa*—मां-स (me-eat) (i.e. this is the etymology of the word *māṁsa* मांस—meat)."

Again in the 11th Chapter of the Manu-smṛti we find :

हिंसया व्याधिभूयस्त्वम् ॥५२॥

Violence (i.e. eating of meat) gives rise to diseases.
(Please see sub-heading 'Prohibition of Beef-eating in Islam' under Chapter : 'Were Cow-slaughter, Meat Sacrifice and Meat-eating Prevalent in the Vedic Age ?')

यक्षरक्षः पिशाचान्नं मद्यं मांसं सुरासवम् ॥९५॥

Intoxicating drinks, flesh and wine are the food of *yakṣas*, *rākṣasas* and *piśācas*.

(Please see sub-heading 'Punishment for Meat-Eating' under Chapter : 'Were Cow-slaughter, Meat Sacrifice and Meat-eating Prevalent in the Vedic Age ?')

It is a matter of great suprise and regret, as to why learned lawyers like Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra (Doctor of Law, LL.D.) and Pandurang Vaman Kane (M.A., LL.M., Advocate) had closed their eyes to afore-cited clear injunctions of Manu against flesh-eating and why did they indulge in such condemnable efforts of propagating flesh-eating.

The above quoted Manu-smṛti 5.55 is attested by Bhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa IV.25 which narrates the episode of King Prācīnabarhi, who used to perform *yajñas* by slaying animals. Holy Nārada told him :

भो भोः प्रजापते राजन् पशून् पश्य त्वयाध्वरे ।
संज्ञापिताञ्जीवसङ्घान्निर्घृणेन सहस्रशः ॥७॥
एते त्वां सम्प्रतीक्षन्ते स्मरन्तो वैशसं तव ।
सम्परेतमयःकूटैश्छिन्दन्त्युत्थितमन्यवः ॥८॥

"Nārada said : O Ruler of men ! O King ! behold the multitudes of creatures slaughtered by you in thousands as animals for sacrifice, merciless that you are (7). Retaining the memory of your cruelty, they eagerly wait for you, their anger having been roused (by the recollection), and will tear you with their horns made of steel, when you have departed to the other world (8)".

When venerable Nārada gave a glimpse of such retributions, King Prācinabrahi was enlightened ; he gave up *yajñas* with violence and went away to perform penances.

How can the slaughter of animals be justified in *madhuparka* and in rites of the manes and gods in face of such historical truth ?

Uttara-Rāma-Carita

Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra writes on page 3 of his above quoted booklet 'Beef in Ancient India' :

> "The passage in which Vālmīki's preparation for the reception of Vasiṣṭha is described in Uttara-Rāma-carita, is so remarkable, that I need not offer any apology to quote it entire. The scene is laid in front of hermitage of Vālmīki . . . ."

After this he has given the running sense of that passage from the play Uttara-Rāma-Carita, which need not be quoted. Let us consider the original text itself.

Bhavabhūti's 'Uttara-Rāma-Carita' is a drama in which the sentiment of pathos (*karuṇā*) dominates. It relates to the renouncing of Sītā Mahārani by Lord Śrī Rāma sometime after his coronation. The plot is not based on any ancient history but it has been supplemented by a number of fancies. It has been considered excusable to add imaginative fancies even in a historical play to augment its aesthetic appeal. But fancies which mar the aesthetic sentiment and which are contrary to the scriptures cannot be considered pardonable. The playwright sends off the preceptor Vasiṣṭha, his wife Arundhatī and Kauśalyā, the mother of Śrī Rāma, to the twelve-year *yajñ*

the hermitage of Ṛṣyaśṛṅga before Lord Śrī Rāma renounces Sītā Mahārani who is pregnant, so that no elders may be present to hinder renouncing of Sītā Mahārani. This event is not supported by any Purāṇa. This fancy can be held pardonable till here.

After about twelve years, on their return journey, they stop at the hermitage of Vālmīki.

Report of the renouncing of Sītā Mahārani spreads like lightning in all directions. Grieved at it, King Janaka, the father of Sītā Mahārani takes up the third āśrama of Vānaprastha and goes for penance to the forest, hermitage of Candradvipa. At the time when Holy Vasiṣṭha, along with Arundhatī and the Royal Mother Kauśalyā, reaches the hermitage of Vālmīki, King Janaka also comes there to meet his friend Vālmīki after interrupting his penances.

Sītā Mahārani was pregnant and about to give birth before her renouncement. Readers may themselves consider how appropriate and justified is the dramatist's innovation to send away the mother-in-law, Royal Mother Kauśalyā, to a far-off place leaving behind her daughter-in-law Sītā Mahārani in such a state ; then to keep Kauśalyā there for twelve years, to deprive her of the likely pleasure at the birth of grand sons, to make all of them reside for twelve years at the hermitage of Ṛṣyaśriṅga even after the renouncing of Sītā Mahārani by her husband had become known to all. It is not found possible even today in a society over-whelmed by modern civilization.

In such a situation of bereavement, the reception with beefy *madhuparka* by sage Vālmīki in his hermitage, Janaka refusing the beefy *madhuparka* and the great sage Vasiṣṭha accepting the beefy *madhuparka*,—can all these innovations in the plot be said to promote the sentiment of *karuṇā* or pathos, to further which this play has been written ? If such are the imaginations of Bhavabhūti, then it hardly spells well of his genius ; and if somebody has interpolated it later, then he has committed an unexcusable and heinous crime. It has also to be noted that when Lord Rāma arrives there, he has not been

welcomed with *madhuparka* in compliance with the injunction of the scriptures.

Even today Western oriented people will not like intoxicants or meat in such an agonising situation ; then readers may themselves judge how debased and vile is the conjuring up of getting beefy *madhuparka* accepted by Sage Vasiṣṭha at the sorrowful occasion of the sad renouncement of Sītā Mahārani and when her father, King Janaka, is present in that very hermitage.

Once when a lion had attacked the Nandinī cow of the great sage Vasiṣṭha, King Dilipa, an ancestor of Śrī Rāma, was ready to offer his life to the lion to save that cow. It is an impossible fancy that the hereditary royal preceptor of such a dynasty as of the Raghus, the great Sage Vasiṣṭha, should accept beef and that too at a time of grief and sorrow.

Because the incident is imaginary, therefore getting beefy *madhuparka* served to sage Vasiṣṭha by sage Vālmiki and getting it accepted, is also imaginary and unreal. Therefore, it is proved that the incident of *madhuparka* with beef freshly obtained by slaying a cow, in the fourth act of the Uttara-Rāma-Carita is imaginary and false and it is not a historical truth.

The above incident is presented by two disciples of Vālmiki as a comic interlude. Readers may themselves judge as to what is the value as to the reality of a comic. Furthermore, it has already been discussed above that there is no possibility of meat in the ingredients of *madhuparka* or in the *madhuparka* rites.

Mahāvira-Carita

Further Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra tries to prove beef in *madhuparka* from the Mahāvira-Carita of Bhavabhūti. Let us now consider it too.

Bhavabhūti's Mahāvira-Carita is the anterior story of Lord Rāma. The sage Viśvāmitra took Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa for protecting his

yajña. The plot of the play begins hereafter. It continues to the exile of Rāma, killing of Rāvaṇa and other demons and coronation of Lord Rāma on his return to Ayodhyā. This is the span of events covered in this play. The plot has not been based on the history available in the Purāṇas. Dramatists usually seem to follow an independent course in this direction. Thus no play can be accepted as history. In short, the plot of the play is :—

"When Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa reach the hermitage of Sage Viśvāmitra for the protection of his *yajña*, at that very time, Kuśadhvaja, the brother of King Janaka, also reaches there along with Sītā and Urmilā, as a representative of King Janaka who had been invited. Seeing Rāma, he is so attracted towards him that he thinks that if there had not been the condition of breaking the bow, then Rāma and Sītā would have been married. There itself comes Sarvamāya, the royal chaplain of Rāvaṇa, with the proposal of Sītā's marriage to Rāvaṇa. The proposal is evaded. In his very presence, demoness Tārakā comes to disturb the *yajña*. Rāma kills her in everybody's presence. Viśvāmitra blesses Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa with divine weapons. Viśvāmitra gets the bow of Śiva there itself by the virtue of his meditative powers and gets it broken by Rāma. Then and there Rāma and Sītā ; Lakṣmaṇa and Urmilā ; Bharata-Māṇḍavi ; and Śatrughna-Śrutakīrti are engaged. Thereafter Subāhu and Mārīca come to create havoc but they are killed.

"The demon Sarvamāya takes all this information to Laṅkā. At the same time, Rāvaṇa gets a letter from Jāmadagnya Paraśurāma that demons are creating havoc in Daṇḍakāraṇya and it should be stopped. As Rāma has broken the bow of Lord Śiva, the preceptor of Paraśurāma, Rāvaṇa plans to incite Paraśurāma to collide with Rāma and sends him to Janakapura where marriage preparations are being made. Paraśurāma is surprised on seeing the handsome figure of Rāma, but feigns anger as before. King Janaka comes and says that if he has come as a guest then he should be served *madhuparka*, fit for a śrotriya and if he has come as an enemy then he should be

faced. After some heroic utterances, Rāma goes inside for the marriage ceremony. Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra try to pacify Paraśurāma. Daśaratha gets ready to face Paraśurāma, when his anger is not pacified. After the marriage-rites are over, Rāma comes there, defeats Paraśurāma, who then goes away.

"Mantharā, the maid-servant of Kaikeyī comes to Rāma with a letter of Kaikeyī from Ayodhyā. In the letter, Kaikeyī reminds of two boons given to her, and in this context expresses her wish that Rāma should go in exile for fourteen years together with Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā and that Bharata should get the throne.

"Lord Rāma goes to his father Daśaratha and seeks permission to go in exile. From Janakapura itself Rāma, along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, goes to the forest leaving behind all the relatives wailing, including Yudhājita the brother of Kaikeyī. On the insistence of Bharata, Rāma leaves for him his golden sandals sent by Śarabhaṅga.

"Bharata, after establishing the sandals of Śrī Rāma at Nandigrāma, starts following the directions of Śrī Rāma. With Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā, Rāma reaches Daṇḍakāraṇya, killing Virādha and other demons, passing through Citrakūṭa and meeting sages on his way. Khara, Dūṣaṇa, Triśira etc, 14000 demons are killed by him on the way. Jaṭāyu is wounded in an encounter with Rāvaṇa while he is carrying away Sītā.

From the narration of Bharata's going to Nandigrāma upto here is covered by an interlude.

"Rāma meets Jaṭāyu who informs him of the kidnapping of Sītā and passes away. Then comes Śramaṇā with a letter of Vibhīṣaṇa seeking refuge and Vibhīṣaṇa surrenders himself for asylum. Afterwards takes place the meeting with Bāli, who challenges to encounter, in which he is killed by Rāma, leaving his kingdom etc. to Sugrīva.

"Laṅkā is ablaze. Trijaṭā informs Mālyavān about the death of Akṣayakumāra. Kumbhakarṇa is awakened. Battle ensues. In the fight, Lakṣmaṇa becomes unconscious. Lakṣmaṇa regains consciousness by the herb *Sañjīvanī*. Meghanāda, Kumbhakarṇa and others are killed. The fire-ordeal of Sītā takes place.

All this has been told in conversation in the form of an interlude.

"Lord Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa return to Ayodhyā by an aeroplane. All meet in re-union and Rāma is coronated King."

We can imagine from the above plot as to how imaginary it is and how different from the historical facts in the Purāṇas.

On page 5 of his above quoted book 'Beef in Ancient India', Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra mentions beef in the Mahāvīra-carita :

"Vasiṣtha, in his turn, likewise, slaughtered the 'fattened-calf' when entertaining Viśwāmitra, Janaka, Śatānanda, Jāmadagnya and other sages and friends, and in the Mahāvīra-carita, when pacifying Jāmadagnya, tempted him by saying, "The heifer is ready for sacrifice, and the food is cooked in ghee. Thou art a learned man, come to the house of the learned ; favour us (by joining in the entertainment)."

In support, the original stanza of the third act of the Mahāvīra-carita has been quoted there in a footnote :

संज्ञप्यते वत्सतरी सर्पिष्मन्नञ्च पच्यते ।
श्रोत्रियः श्रोत्रियगृहानागतोऽसि जुषस्व नः ॥

It seems that संज्ञप्यते वत्सतरी has been taken here as 'the heifer is ready for sacrifice'. Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra has said before that Vasiṣṭha slaughtered a fattened calf to entertain Viśvāmitra, Janaka, Śatānanda, Jāmadagnya, other sages and friends. In this stanza

there is nowhere mentioned that a fattened calf was slaughtered, and in the Mahāvīra-carita there is no such indication anywhere before or after this stanza. It is not clear, wherefrom Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra has brought in the 'slaughter of a fattened calf'. Later on he says 'the heifer is ready for sacrifice i.e., slaughter'. These two statements in his text, that is (1) Vasiṣṭha slaughtered the fattened calf and (2) the heifer is ready for sacrifice, that is for slaughter, are contradictory. In this way such people try to confuse simple folk by making such absurd antithetical statements.

In the above context, Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra try to pacify Paraśurāma, and in the original text their words are :

इष्टापूर्त्तविधेः सपत्नशमनात्प्रेयान्मघोनः सखा
येन द्यौरिव वज्रिणा वसुमती वीरेण राजन्वती ।
यस्यैते वयमध्रतः किमपरं वंशश्च वैवस्वतः
सोऽयं त्वां तनयप्रियः परिणतो राजा शमं याचते ॥
तद्विरम शुष्ककलहात् इदं चास्तु ।

"The aged King Daśaratha, who has become a friend of Indra by performing *yajñas*, by constructing temples and by vanquishing enemies, who has become famous on earth as a good King like the divine King Indra in heaven, with whom we are allied and who is a scion of the Solar Race, moved by affection for his son, he requests you to be calm. So give up this futile quarrel."

We have already discussed the stanza cited by Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra in support of his contention in a footnote of his book. Neither is there any mention in the Mahāvīra-carita that Vasiṣṭha slaughtered a fattened calf for Viśvāmitra, Janaka, Śatānanda, Jāmadagnya, other sages and friends, nor is there any mention of the entertainment of them all by Vasiṣṭha.

The above quoted 'संज्ञप्यते, वत्सतरी' etc. (Mahāvīra-carita 3.21 occurs just after 'इष्टापूर्त्तविधेः' etc. (Mahāvīra-carita 3.1) which is being

addressed by Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra to 'Jāmadagnya Paraśurāma. Earlier King Janaka has expressed :—

ऋषिरयमतिथिश्चैविष्टरः पाद्यमर्घ्यं
तदनु च मधुपर्कः कल्प्यतां श्रोत्रियाय ।" (2,44)

That is, if he is a ṛsi (sage), he may be offered a seat, *pādya* (water for washing his feet) and *arghya* (water for cleaning hands) and be honoured by offering *madhuparka*, fit for a śrotriya. The expression *samjñapyate vatsatarī* 'संज्ञप्यते वत्सतरी' etc, is in the context of honouring with *madhuparka* rite. It has already been discussed and proved that there is no possibility of any kind of animal flesh in *madhuparka*. Prescription of the gift of a cow with *madhuparka* is also indicated in the scriptures. In the phrase referred to *samjñapyate* (संज्ञप्यते) is a word which may mean violence (*hiṁsā*) as well as non-violence (*a-hiṁsā*). In the Sanskrit-English Dictionary of Monier-Williams, page 1133, column 3, *samjñapana* is interpreted as 'causing agreement or harmony ; killing a sacrificial animal'. In Atharva-veda 6.74.1-2 *samjñapana* has the former meaning :

सं वः पृच्यन्तां तन्वः सं मनांसि समु व्रता ।
सं वोऽयं ब्रह्मणस्पतिर्भगः सं वो अजीगमत् ॥
संज्ञपनं वो मनसोऽथो संज्ञपनं हृदः ।
अथो भगस्य यच्छ्रान्तं तेन संज्ञपयामि वः ॥

Ralph T. H. Griffith, in his translation of the Hymns of the Atharva-veda, published by Master Khelari Lal & Sons, Varanasi, third edition (1962, page 285) has translated these mantras as follows :—

"Close gathered be your bodies :
be your minds and vows in unison !

Here present Brahmanaspati and Bhaga have assembled you.
Let there be union of your minds,
let there be union of your hearts :
All that is troubled in your lot with this
I mend and harmonize."

Supporters of beef-eating interpret the words '*saṁjñapyate vatsatarī*' as 'the heifer is ready for sacrifice'. As there is neither *gomedha* nor another similar *yajña* performance, interpreting '*saṁjñapyate*' as 'killing a sacrificial animal' is not possible according to Monier-Williams' Dictionary. As the scriptures prescribe the gift of a cow in *madhuparka* rites, there are historical examples of the gift of a cow in reception with *madhuparka*, there is not a single historical example of beef served with *madhuparka*, and as the meat-eaters even these days would not accept raw meat with *madhuparka* obtained by slaughter on the spot and as there is no possibility of any kind of meat in *madhuparka* as discussed and proved earlier, the only justified interpretation of the words '*saṁjñapyate vatsatarī* would be offering a heifer in gift to Jāmadagnya Paraśurāma and thus making their **union** and **harmony.** The whole stanza can be translated as follows :—

(वत्सतरी) The heifer (संज्ञप्यते) is offered to you as a gift. (अन्नं) Dishes (पच्यते) are being cooked (सर्पिषि) in ghee. (श्रोत्रिय) O Śrotriya! (आगतोऽसि) you have come (श्रोत्रियगृहान्) to the house of a śrotriya. (जुषस्व नः) Please favour us by accepting our hospitality.

Let the readers decide themselves as to which is the appropriate interpretation with reference to the context of the subject.

How surprising and shocking it is that men like Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra who are considered well-read and learned, should lead astray the simple countrymen, who respect their learning, by such imagined contentions and by twisting them according to their fancy. Its reasons have been enunciated very clearly in the 'Introduction.' To this day his book is quoted with great pride by the Government of India to mislead the people that beef was taken in ancient India.

Mahokṣam, Mahājam and Vebatam in the Reception to a Guest

In his "History of Dharmaśāstra', Vol. II, Part 2, page 750, lines 8-17, in the Chapter on *Nṛyajña*, or *Manuṣya-yajña* P. V. Kane writes :

"Yājñavalkya-Smṛti 1.109 also says that a big ox or a goat was to be kept apart for a guest learned in Veda. But the commentary Mitākṣarā on Yājñavalkya-Smṛti and other medieval writers to whom flesh-eating was an anathema and an unspeakable sin for a Brahmana remark that an ox or a goat was to be understood as set apart for the guest to flatter him (with the words 'this ox is yours') just as one says in humility 'all this house is yours' and that the ox or goat was not meant to be given in gift or to be killed since it would be impossible to find an ox each time a *śrotriya* guest comes."

The relevant stanza of the Yājñavalkya-Smṛti 1.109 occurs in the section on the duties of a householder within the chapter on conduct '(*ācāra*)'. It runs as follows :

महोक्षं वा महाजं वा श्रोत्रियायोपकल्पयेत् ।
सत्क्रियाऽन्वासनं स्वादु भोजनं सूनृतं वचः ॥ (याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृति १.१०९)

It simply means :

"One should offer a big bull or a big goat before a guest who is versed in the Vedas (*śrotriya*). (Thereafter) one should welcome him (with *pādya, arghya, ācamana*, a seat etc.). (After he has taken his seat) one should sit down near him ; give him delicious food and speak pleasant words."

In the aforesaid stanza, the original Sanskrit word for offering a big bull or a big goat is *upakalpayet*, which is conjugated from the root *klṛp* (क्लृप) with the prefix *upa*-.

The meaning of *'upa-klṛp* (उप-क्लृप) in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, page 195 column 3 is :

to be fit for ;	to be ready at hand ;		to become ;
to serve as ;	to lead to ;	to take the shape or form of ;	
to become ;	to be ;	to prepare ;	to make ready ;
to equip ;	to procure ;	to bring near ;	to fetch ;
to allot ;	to assign ;	to put or set up ;	
to turn towards ;	to impart ;	to arrange ;	to communicate ;
to assume ;	to suppose.		

It carries no nuisance of *hiṁsā* or killing. It is clear that it does not even imply the killing of these animals and fetting the guest with their meat. A *śrotriya*, i.e. a guest versed in the Vedas, is entertained with *madhuparka*—thus it is specified in the succeeding stanza number 110. In this context, either in the preceding or succeeding stanzas there is no mention of offering meat with *madhuparka*, and nowhere is there any reference to killing.

It proves that animal meat of any kind is not required in *madhuparka*.

The commentators opine that a big bull (*mahokṣa*) or a big goat (*mahāja*) is brought before a guest, which is just a part of etiquette wherein the host as a matter of courtesy says that this is your house ; this thing is yours, etc., etc. In fact, they are not intended to be presented to the guest. New guests, learned in the Vedas, visited people now and then, and if a big bull or a big goat were presented to every one of them, where could one obtain so many big bulls or big goats. Nor, does the original stanza convey such an intention. But, it is simple enough to understand that one who has the means may present the things enjoined, and one who does not possess the means to do so, he need neither offer them nor give them away.

Now we come to words of politeness and courtesy. This is the practice to this very day. Whenever a guest comes, courteous sentences are spoken, such as 'this is your house, please make yourself free and

comfortable ; such and such a thing is yours, you may feel free to use anything you like' etc., etc.

Whether the offering of a big bull or a big goat is significant or not, will be considered further on.

The alleged offering of a big bull or a big goat to a guest also occurs in the Śatapatha-Brahmaṇa etc. It may also be taken up for discussion.

In the same section on *Nṛyajña* or *Manuṣya-yajña* of his "History of Dharmaśāstra", Vol. II, Part 2, chapter 21, page 750, lines 4-6, P. V. Kane writes :

"The Śatapatha shows that an ox or a goat was cooked for a guest, either a King or a Brāhmaṇa (III. 4.1.2.)."

Its original text is as follows :—

अथ यस्मादातिथ्यं नाम। अतिथिर्वा एष एतस्यागच्छति यत्सोमः क्रीतस्तस्मा एतद्यथा राज्ञे वा ब्राह्मणाय वा महोक्षं वा महाजं वा पचेतदह मानुषं हविर्देवानामेवमस्मा एतदातिथ्यं करोति॥

(शतपथब्राह्मण ३.४.१.२)

Some people translate the verb *pacet* (पचेत्) in this passage as 'cooking on fire'. The common meaning of *pacet* is 'cooking on fire'. But what is the sense intended here has to be discussed.

According to Chapter 318 of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, Yājñavalkya obtained the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa from Sūrya. Through such a revelation he must have authored the Yājñavalkya-Smṛti. Thus there should be consonance in both the works in the matter of honouring a guest with a big bull or a big goat. Pandit Dinanath Sharma Shastri has discussed this question at length in the sixth volume of his Hindi book Śri-Sanātana-Dharmālok' on pages 333-334 and pages 342-343.

It is translated below *in extenso* :

"The meaning of *pacet* in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa is not 'cooking', but it is 'presenting ; offering' (*vyaktīkuryāt* व्यक्तीकुर्यात्). Here the root is *paci vyaktīkaraṇe* (पचि व्यक्तीकरणे) of the first conjugation, *seṭ*, and *ātmanepada*. In the Bālamanoramā commentary (editions of Guruprasad Shastri and of the Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office) it is said :—*pacetyeke* (पचेत्येके) i.e., there is also the variant *pac* (पच्) of the root *paci* (पचि). It signifies to present *vyaktīkaraṇa*. This meaning proves the identical intention of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa and the Yājñavalkya-Smṛti. Now the question arises that while the aforesaid root is *ātmanepada*, in the Śatapatha it is not *ātmanepada*. In this context it should be noted that the *ātmanepada* is not obligatory by the rule *anudātte tvalakṣaṇam ātmanepadam anityam* (अनुदात्ते त्वलक्षणमात्मनेपदमनित्यम्). Hereby it is not *ātmanepada* in the Śatapatha or it can also be an *ārṣa* or aberrational usage.

Our meaning is attested by other texts also.* In the mantra *ukṣāṇam pṛśnim apacanta* (उक्षाणं पृश्निम् अपचन्त) (Ṛgveda 1.164.43) the root *pac* has been commented upon by Sāyaṇa as

उक्षाणं फलस्य सेक्तारं सोमम् ऋत्विजः अपचन्त···
पचधात्वर्थानादरेण तिङ्प्रत्ययः करोत्यर्थः ।
स च क्रियासामान्यवचनः । अत औचित्यात् सम्पादितवन्तः इत्यर्थः ।

*This interpretation of the root *pac* (पच) is confirmed by the *Mādhavīya-dhātu-vṛti* of Sāyaṇācarya (Pracyabharati Prakashan, Vāranasi, 1964, root no. 107 of the *bhvādi-gaṇa* (भ्वादिगण) 1.86-87 *paci vyaktīkaraṇe* (पचि व्यक्तीकरणे). At the end it is stated :

पच इति दुर्गः तथा वर्धमानोऽपि, यदाह । अनिड्विधौ पच्यादिसूत्रे डुपचष् पाके पच व्यक्तीकरणे इति । सम्मातायां तु वर्धमानवद् उक्त्वा 'अन्यैस्त्वयमिदित् पठ्यते' इत्युक्तम् । 'तिङो गोत्रादीनि' इत्यत्र पचति गोत्रमित्युपादाय 'पच व्यक्तीकरणे' इति पठन् न्यासकारः परस्मैपदिनं च मन्यते ।

(Contd. to next page bottom)

Here the root *pac* signifies 'to effect ; to accomplish'. Similarly in, Diṅ-nāga's drama 'Kundamālā' too :

इक्ष्वाकूणां च सर्वेषां क्रियाः पुंसवनादिकाः । अस्माभिरेव पच्यन्ते (१.३१)

the root *pac* means 'to effect'. Likewise, in the famous Purāṇic hymn *Deva-stotra* there is the sentence :

नमो मत्स्यकूर्मादिनानास्वरूपे ······ मखादिक्रियापाककर्त्रे ऽपहन्त्रे

where *pāka-kartre* means 'one who effects or accomplishes'. So in the passage in Yājñavalkya's Śatapatha also the meaning of the *pac* is 'to effect ; to accomplish' etc. and not 'to cook'. This very meaning is intended by Yājñavalkya, as it has been expressed by him in his Yājñavalkya-smṛti.

** ** **

Or, *ukṣā* also means Soma, for example सोम उक्षाऽभवत् (Sāyaṇa's commentary on Ṛgveda 1.164.43). Its accomplishment is intended here, and it is relevant too. In fact the source of Brāhmanic महोक्षं पचेत् appears to be the Ṛgveda mantra उक्षाणं पृश्निमपचन्त (Ṛgveda 1.164.43). Here Sāyaṇa has translated it as the preparation of Soma.

(Continued from previous page)

"Durga has accepted the identity of पचि व्यक्तीकरणे and पच व्यक्तीकरणे. Vardhamāna also follows the same interpretation. The book *Sammatā* also expresses the same opinion as Vardhamāna and adds that some others read it as *paci*. The author of the *Nyāsa* commentary admits the root *paca vyaktīkaraṇe* (पच व्यक्तीकरणे) according to the Paninean sūtra 8.1.27 *tiṅo gotrādīni* (तिङो गोत्रादीनि) and considers it *Parasmaipada*. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa also it is *Parasmaipada* and so the meaning 'to make evident' (व्यक्तीकरणे) suits the context."

So it appears to be appropriate in the Brāhmaṇa too i.e. to prepare Soma for the guest. Or *ukṣā* is also the tuberous plant *ṛṣabha*. The names of this plant are all synonyms of *vṛṣabha* or bull. Because of its succulence, the plant *ukṣā* is one of the medicinals for long life (*Rāja-nighaṇṭu, varga* 5). There the following synonyms are given for it : *ṛṣabhaḥ* ; *ukṣā* ; *gauḥ* ; *vṛṣabhaḥ*. *Aja* also means *ajamodā* or common carroway. *Mahāja* means the big carroway. It is probable that these medicinals were offered to a guest after food, as a digestive or invigorating tonic. Or, there is the sentence अजा व्रीहयस्तावत् सप्तवार्षिकाः in the third story of the Kākolukīya section of the Pañcatantra, and the stanza :

> बीजैर्यज्ञेषु यष्टव्यमिति वै वैदिकी श्रुतिः ।
> अजसंज्ञानि बीजानि नो छागं हन्तुमर्हथ ॥
> (म. भा. शान्तिपर्व ३३७.४)

In the Mahābhārata (Śāntiparva 337.4), the word *aja* is clearly stated to mean 'seven-year old rice'.

The cooking of such rice, or of the *vṛṣabha* tuber, or of Soma-juice, might have been intended here.

If we do not accept the aforesaid meanings and insist it to mean that a great bull (*mahokṣa*) or great goat (*mahāja*) were slaughtered and their meat was cooked on fire, then it would be against Vedic principles and thus it will be without sanction and invalid.

The Vasiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra 4.8 also refers to the reception of a guest by a *mahokṣa* or a *mahāja*. अथापि ब्राह्मणाय वा राजन्याय वाभ्यागताय महोक्षाणं वा महाजं वा पचेदेवमस्मा आतिथ्यं कुर्वन्तीति । After the foregone discussion, it is not necessary to discuss it over again. Some maintain that the preceding stanzas refer to meat in *madhuparka* and to killing in *yajña*, but we have discussed it at length under the caption of 'Vasiṣṭha-dharma-sūtra and Śāṅkhāyana-gṛhya- sūtra' in this chapter.

Mahokṣam, Mahājam and Vehatam in the Reception to a Guest

In his "History of Dharmaśāstra", Vol. 2, Part I, in the section on Madhuparka in Chapter 10, page 542 ; lines 6-10, P. V. Kane writes :—

"It appears that the Aitareya Brāhmana III. 4, when it says that 'if the ruler of men comes as a guest or anyone else deserving of honour comes, people kill a bull or a cow (that has contacted a habit of abortion)' refers to *madhuparka*, though that word is not actually used."

The original text of this sentence of Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa III.9 is quoted there in a footnote :

तदथैवादो मनुष्यराज आगतेऽन्यस्मिन्वाऽर्हति उक्षाणं वा वेहतं वा क्षदन्ते ।

It is further stated that this is cited by Medhātithi on Manu-Smṛti 3.119 and by Haradatta on Gautama-dharma-sūtra 17.30.

In Vol. II, Part 2, in the Section on *Nṛyajña* or *Manuṣya-yajña* in Chapter 21, page 750, lines 6-8 of the same work, P. V. Kane writes :

"Vide also Aitareya Brāhmana III.4, for the offering of an ox or a barren cow to king or another deserving person coming as a guest."

We have already discussed Manu-Smṛti 3.119 under caption 'Manusmṛti'. It is clear beyond doubt that there is no reference to meat therein, and the question of beef does not arise at all.

In the Gautama-dharma-sûtra 2.8 prohibited foods are listed. The 30th sūtra reads धेन्वनडुहौ च, which simply means that the cow (*dhenu*) and the bullock (*anaḍuh*) are also among prohibited items and should not be eaten. This does not prove the presence of meat or beef in *madhuparka*.

The citation of Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa III.4 in a footnote by P. V. Kane is the 15th pada and the whole reads :

अग्निं मन्थन्ति सोमे राजन्यागते तद्यथैवादो मनुष्यराज आगतेऽन्य-स्मिन्वा हेत्युक्षाणं वा वेहतं वा क्षदन्त एवमेवास्मा एतत्क्षदन्ते यदग्निं मन्थन्त्यग्निर्हि देवानां पशुः ॥

Earlier, it has been established that the word *pacet* (पचेत्) occurring in a similar context in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa corresponds to *upakalpayet* in the Yājñavalkya-smṛti. Now we have to consider if *kṣadante* occurring in this context of the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa also corresponds to it. In his Hindi book, 'Śrī-Sanātana-Dharmāloka', Vol. 6, pages 360-374, Pandit Dinanath Sharma Shastri has discussed it at length. Hereunder are a few quotations :—

"Now we have to consider the root *kṣad*. The cited Brāhmaṇa passage means : "If a king or a celebrated *śrotriya* comes, then the *kṣadana* of a bull or cow should be effected in his honour." The root *kṣad* does not occur in Pāṇini's *Dhātupāṭha*. So we cannot know its meaning therefrom. But we find it in the Uṇādi (Pañcapadī) sūtra, *tṛn-tṛcau śaṁsi-kṣad-ādibhyaḥ saṁjñāyāṁ cāniṭau.*

(तृन्तृचौ शंसि-क्षदादिभ्यः संज्ञायां चानिटौ) (2.94 ; 25.1)

So it is clearly a root derived from the sūtras. But its meaning is not clear even from the sūtras. (page 362)

"In the Nighaṇṭu 2.8 where roots signifying 'to eat' are listed, there is no mention of *kṣad*—this fact should be noted. In 2.19, which is a list of roots meaning 'to kill', the root *kṣad* is not mentioned—it should also be noted." (page 363)

"Now we should look into the usage of the root *kṣad* in the mantras of the Ṛgveda Saṁhitā and also consult the commentary of Sāyaṇa on the relevant passage. We should explore the meaning assigned to it by ancient scholars." (page 363)

"The following passage of the Mahābhāṣya 1.3.1 is well known :

अनेकार्था अपि धातवो भवन्ति। तद् यथा—वपिः प्रकिरणे (बीजाधाने) दृष्टः, छेदने चापि वर्तते।......करोतिरभूत प्रादुर्भावे दृष्टो निर्मलीकरणे चापि वर्तते, निक्षेपणे चापि वर्तते। एवमिहापि तिष्ठतिरेव व्रजिक्रियामाह, तिष्ठतिरेव व्रजिक्रियाया निवृत्तिम्।

So it is possible that a single root can have two opposite meanings, e.g., the root *sthā* means 'to stay' and 'to move'. Then, if for contextual propriety we take an unspecified meaning of a root, then it will not be against grammatical considerations." (pages 363-364)

"Thus, *bhakṣaṇa* (consuming) also means 'to make use of', 'to employ', or 'to accept'." (page 364)

"In Ṛgveda 1.25.18 Ācārya Sāyaṇa has written : हवि क्षदसे—अश्नासि where, after having translated *kṣadase* as 'you eat', he goes on to take *aśana* to mean 'to accept' हवि—स्वीकाराद् उक्तम्। If the root *kṣad* means 'to eat', does this meaning apply to the Ṛgvedic Brāhmaṇa passage उक्षाणं वेहतं वा क्षदन्ते। Then it will mean : 'They eat a bull or a *vehata* on the arrival of a king or a *śrotriya*'. But is this meaning applicable here ? If we translate it this way, then it will refer not to its partaking by the guest but the eating of the *vehata* by the host himself. Haridatta has prohibited its eating by anyone other than the guest. If we take *kṣad* in the meaning 'to accept', then it will mean 'they accept the cow or the bull', i.e. 'they bring them for the guest'—this is a relevant meaning. (pages 364-365)

"In the Uṇādi, where a Ṛgvedic Brāhmaṇa passage is cited to illustrate the usage of the root *kṣad*, there *kṣadanta* means neither 'to hack to pieces' nor 'to eat'. The meaning 'to hack to pieces' would be most inappropriate." (page 365)

"*Hiṁsā* also refers to 'goading' (ताडन). In the Nirukta 1.3.2 *hanta* has been explained as (हन्ते : प्राप्नुर्हनने). Here the meaning of *han* is 'to goad' and not to kill or deprive of life. *Kṣatā* in the sense

of 'a charioteer' (Atharva-veda 5.7.14 : 9.11.1) also refers to the goading of the chariot's horse, and not to its killing. While bringing a cow or bull to a guest, it had to be goaded and this was its *hiṁsā*." (Page 366)

"When the root *kṣad* can have a third meaning besides 'to hack to pieces', 'to eat' as pointed out above, then this sūtra-occurring root can have other meanings too. Views of other learned people should also be taken into consideration in this context." (Page 366)

"While explaining the word *kṣadma* Skandaswāmi writes: "क्षद स्थैर्ये (सौ०)". The same view is held by Devarāja-yajvā on Nirukta 1.12.3 : स्वकार्ये स्थिरं भवति, जलाशयं व्याप्य स्थिरीभवतीति वा. Thus the passage can mean—'When the guest comes, he should steady the cow or the bull'; this meaning is also relevant here. The author of the Subodhinī derives *kṣadma* meaning 'water' from the root क्षद गति हिंसनयोः. In क्षदति—हिनस्ति पिपासामुष्णतां वा अभीप्सितं वा पुरुषम्, the root signifies 'going', as the killing of the un-killable cow (*aghnyā*) was not possible. *Kṣadanti* can mean अतिथिपार्श्वे गां गमयन्तीति, i.e., 'they take the cow near the guest'—a meaning which is also relevant here. One who is dearly loved is never killed, and he certainly is brought near." (Page 367)

"While explaining the word *kṣattā* in his Sudhā-Vyākhyā on the Amarakośa, Bhānuji-Dīkṣita, the son of Bhaṭṭoji-Dīkṣita, writes : क्षदृ संवरणे सौत्रः (2.8.59). Here the root *kṣad* has been rendered as 'closing'—*saṁvaraṇa*. He accepts the same meaning in the word *kṣatriyaḥ* (2.8.1). Swami Dayananda has also accepted the same meaning in his Uṇādi-kośa." (pages 367-368)

"Bhānuji-Dīkṣita has explained *kṣattā* in Amarakośa 2.10.3 as क्षदति, क्षदते वा, क्षद सम्भृतौ. Here the meaning of the root *kṣad* is indicated as 'bringing up'. As the killing of the unkillable cow (*aghnyā*) and of the unkillable bull (*aghnya*) is impossible, the cow and bull were brought up for being donated to a guest—this can also be relevant. In the Brāhmaṇa sentence, the locative case can be considered to be used in the meaning of 'by reason of', 'for'. (page 368)

"The foregoing investigations prove that the root *kṣad* has many meanings, and it does not mean only 'to kill' or 'to eat'. A meaning that is appropriate to the context and one which does not go against the accepted principles, that meaning alone is correct in that context, and not any other meaning. If गङ्गायां घोषः is a case of transferred meaning, then in गङ्गायां महिषास्तरन्ति, it would not be correct to take it in a transferred sense as in the previous case, though there is no technical impropriety. In the Kusumāñjali 3.12, Udayana Ācārya holds the same view :

श्रुतान्वयादनाकाङ्क्षं न वाक्यं ह्यन्यदिच्छति ।
पदार्थान्वय-वैधुर्यात् तदाक्षिप्तेन सङ्गतिः ॥ (कुसुमाञ्जली ३१.२)

i.e. in the case of a logical connection no other signification is required ; in the event of an incongruity another meaning appropriate to the context has to be sought. Hence, when the incongruity of killing an *aghnyā* or one who is not to be killed arises, we have to seek a meaning that suits the context." (pages 368-369)

"The readers should consider another piece of evidence from the Vedas and Sāyaṇa's commentary thereon, which clearly fortifies our interpretation. In the Ṛgveda 6.13.2 क्षत्ता वामस्य देव । भूरेः, *kṣattā* is a derivative of the root *kṣad*. Sāyaṇa comments :

ऋतस्य उदकस्य वा क्षत्ता—क्षदतिरत्र दानकर्मा, दाता भवसि ।

Here Sāyaṇa has clearly stated that the root *kṣad* means 'to give'. It merits consideration as to why Sāyaṇa has translated the root *kṣad* as 'to give' against his own statement that *kṣad* is primarily used in the sense of 'killing'. It is clear that here 'killing' is not pertinent, hence the meaning 'giving away'. If it is so, then in the passage of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa too, the 'giving of a cow or of a bull (*aghnyā*—not to be killed) is intended. It is but natural, as the killing of one who is not to be killed is a contradiction. On setting out for a journey, the meaning of *saindhavam ānaya* as 'bring salt' would be unwise ; 'bring a horse' alone would be the relevant meaning.

Hence, in the sentence उक्षाणं वेहतं वा क्षदन्ते of the Ṛgvedic Brāhmaṇa, the meaning 'he gives a bull or a cow' alone is proved and pertinent. Thus its identity with the महोक्षं वा महाजं वा श्रोत्रियायोपकल्पयेत् of the Yājñavalkya-smṛti (1.5.199) is established. *Upakalpana* also means 'donating'.

The Mitākṣarā realised the impossibility of such a big donation, and hence it interpreted it as a polite offer by words alone, in honour of the guest. It is indeed impossible to donate bulls every time. How can a person have so many of them ? But here an ordinary cow and an ordinary bull are enjoined—hence there is no incongruity even in donating.

The meaning of *vehata* as a miscarrying cow is not appropriate here, because such cows cannot always be obtained."

(pages 369-370)

"In this way, by these authoritative proofs it has been settled that in महोक्षं पचेत्, it means 'he should present' and in उक्षाणं क्षदन्ते it means 'he should donate'. Here the root *kṣad* means 'to donate'. When the root *kṣad* in the sense of 'to donate' is attested by the Vedas, Sāyaṇa also corroborates it, and all the scriptures from the Vedas downwards are replete with the glorious praises of 'donating a cow', then this meaning alone is correct from all points of view ; it alone is appropriate." (pages 370-371)

"Scholars mis-understood the root *kṣad* as 'to kill', 'to eat' because they did not find it in the Dhātupāṭha where the meaning of roots are given. Instead, they came across *khad* (खद स्थैर्ये हिंसायां च, चाद्द भक्षणे) and they imposed the meanings of *khad* on the root *kṣad*. Whatever be the meaning of the root *khad* of the *Dhātupāṭha*, it does not follow that the *sautra* root with *kṣ* means the same. When the root *kṣad* is attested in the meaning 'to donate', and this meaning is also appropriate ; when the eating or killing of a cow and bull is prohibited and censured in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa ; when Vedas and other scriptures are full of the glories of donating a cow ; when Sage Yājñavalkya of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa and the Yājñavalkya-smṛti

desires the donation or presenting of a cow or bull in *madhuparka* ; when in the Bṛhādāraṇyaka which is the 14th book (*kāṇḍa*) of the Śatapatha, Yājñavalkya clearly wants to perpetuate the cows गोकामा इव स्मः (14.6.1.4 ; 11.6.3.2), then the unanimity of all these authorities proves that in the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa passage too *kṣadana* means 'the donation' of a cow or a bull." (pages 371-372)

In the reception to a guest, after the offering of *pādya*, *arghya* etc., several Gṛhya-sūtras and Dharma-sūtras prescribe the *madhuparka* and alongwith it the giving of a cow is also enjoined. The offering of a big bull or a big goat occurs only in the Yājñavalkya-smṛti and Vasiṣtha-dharma-sūtra, but there is no reference to a miscarrying cow (*vehata*). Its relevance is not clear. In the Śatapatha and Aitareya Brāhmaṇas, there is no imperative injunction, but there it is stated as an illustration that as on the arrival of a human king or of a learned Brāhmaṇa, one would महोक्षं वा महाजं वा पचेत् (Śatapatha) or उक्षाणं वेहतं वा क्षदन्ते (Aitareya), likewise one should duly offer all the courtesies to King Soma who has arrived as a guest. It means that the followers of Yājñavalkya used to present a *mahokṣa* or a *mahāja* in the reception to a guest alongwith *pādya*, *arghya*, *madhuparka*, etc. If this is correct, then the intention of the Śatapatha and Aitareya Brāhmaṇas regarding the *mahokṣa* or *mahāja* is probably the same as that of Yājñavalkya-smṛti or the Vasiṣtha-dharma-sūtra ; for such a reference has not been found in any other book. Then how can it be that the word *pacet* in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa and *kṣadante* in the Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa carry the sense of killing (*hiṁsā*) when the meaning of Yājñavalkya-smṛti is clearly of non-killing ? Hence those who impart the sense of killing to *pacet* or *kṣadante*, they do so without considering the context, which is altogether inappropriate.

Another point also deserves consideration. *Ukṣa* is a bull for breeding. High pedigree stud bulls are very few in number. Everyone does not own such a bull. One stud bull suffices for a village. If a *śrotriya* guest does not own several cows, the presentation of a stud bull will be of no use to him, and the host giver will render

great disservice to the community of cows. Thus, bringing a big stud-bull for presentation to a guest in his reception, does not make sense, and much less so killing it. Bringing a stud-bull to receive a king also makes no sense, because the king normally owns several cows along with proportionate number of bulls in a royal cow-stall.

If we try to translate *ukṣā* as a draught bull, then such a meaning is not attested by usage. The word for a draught bull is *anaḍuh*. Secondly, if one does not present so many and such heavy things to a guest as to require a bull to carry them, then one cannot understand the propriety of such a presentation. If the bull presented is intended for agricultural purposes, it may be appropriate for a *śrotriya*, but not for a king.

The presentation of a big goat can be only for carrying burden, but that too does not seem to be proper.

It is likely that महोक्षं वा महाजं वा has a spiritual signification, which has not been elucidated so far. Scholars should investigate it.

It is certain that the महोक्षं वा महाजं वा are not intended to be slaughtered. Those who try to force such a meaning, they are in the wrong.

Meaning of Goghno'tithiḥ

Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra quotes Colebrooke in his aforesaid book 'Beef in Ancient India', page 5, lines 20-24 :

> "Colebrooke noticed the subject in his essay on 'the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindus', in which he says, "it seems to have been anciently the custom to slay a cow on this occasion (the reception of a guest), and a guest was therefore called GOGHNA or cow-killer."

Goghnaḥ (गोघ्नः) has been explained as गौर्हन्यते तस्मै गोघ्नः। There is no scope for difference of opinion in this etymology. There certainly is difference in the interpretation of हन्यते. Those, who

propagate beef-eating, find it handy and interpret *goghnaḥ* (गोघ्नः) as 'the killer of a cow', inspite of the fact that they are aware of the multiple meanings of the root *han* :

हन—हिंसागत्योः । गतेस्त्रयोऽर्थाः—ज्ञानं, गमनं, प्राप्तिश्चेति ।

Besides the meaning 'to kill', the root हन् in हन्यते also means 'to multiply ; to go ; to move ; to obtain ; to attain ; to get ; to touch ; to come into contact ; etc. (see the Sanskrit-English dictionaries of Monier-Williams and V. S. Apte).' But they do not want to take these meanings into account because by them their main purpose of the propagation of beef-eating is not served. According to the previous discussions, when any possibility of beef or any other kind of meat cannot be proved in the *madhuparka* rites to entertain a guest, but what can be proved is the gifting of a cow, then it is clear that the meanings of *goghnaḥ* (गोघ्नः) can only be—one who 'touches' the cow for accepting her in gift and by drinking her milk ; or one who 'multiplies' the number of his cows by taking the cow in gift, etc.

According to the *Dhātupāṭha* (धातुपाठ) of Ācārya Pāṇini which reads हन हिंसागत्योः the meanings of the root *han* (हन्) are *hiṁsā* (violence) and *gati* (movement). *Gati* (गति) has three meanings ; (i) *jñāna* (learning) ; (ii) *gamana* (going or moving) ; and (iii) *prāpti* (obtaining, attaining, getting). The meaning of हन्यते in गौर्हन्यते तस्मै गोघ्नः is गम्यते, प्राप्यते i.e. 'attained, obtained'.

Scriptural proof has been adduced under the heading 'Gift of a Cow in Madhuparka', which makes it clear that there can be no other meaning of *goghnaḥ* (गोघ्नः) except 'one who gets a cow in gift', or 'one who takes a cow with him after obtaining her in gift'.

Pāṇini's sūtra दाशगोघ्नौ सम्प्रदाने 3.4.73 also makes it clear that the words दाश and गोघ्न are formed irregularly in the sense of the dative (सम्प्रदाने). If the dative case (चतुर्थी) alone had been intended here, i.e. if the aim had been to convey that the cow was killed for a guest, then the word सम्प्रदाने would not have been used, but तस्मै would have been employed instead, i.e. an indeclinable (अव्यय) indicative of

the dative case would have been used. But, as it is phrased सम्प्रदाने, the only sense expressed here is that of gifting. Therefore, the correct and genuine signification of गोघ्नोऽतिथिः is 'a person to whom a cow is gifted'.

The word हस्तघ्न occurs in the mantra beginning अहिरिव भोगैः in the Ṛgveda and Yajurveda. Its meaning has been given in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary on page 1295, column 1, as follows :

हस्तघ्न—a kind of hand-guard (protecting the hand in archery RV).

When the word (हस्तघ्न) *hastaghna* can mean 'a kind of hand-guard' then why can the meaning of गोघ्नोऽतिथिः not be 'a guest who protects a cow' ?

The meaning of Atithinir-Gāḥ (अतिथिनीर्गाः) and Atithigva (अतिथिग्व)

Under the sub-heading 'Food and Drink' in Chapter 19 'Social and Economic Conditions' of 'The History and Culture of the Indian People', Vol. I, The Vedic Age, page 393, lines 20-22, Dr. V. M. Apte mentions the expression अतिथिनीर्गाः (अतिथिनीः+गा.) and asserts that its only meaning is that the cow was slaughtered for a guest. In support he cites Ṛgveda 10.68.3.

Macdonell and Keith also write under the entry *māṁsa* in the Vedic Index, part II, page 145 :

> "the name *Atithigva* probably means 'slaying cows for guests', (Bloomfield, American Journal of Philology, 17.426 ; Journal of the American Oriental Society, 16, cxxiv. Cf. *Atithinīrgāḥ* 'cows fit for guests', RV.x.68.3)."

Prof. Bloomfield has also written on the problem in the Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. 16 (1896), page cxxiv line 12 to page cxxv line 6, in the proceedings of the American Oriental Society's meeting in New York N.Y. on March 29th, 30th and 31st

1894, Item No. 17 "On the group of Vedic Words ending in *gva* and *gvin*" :

> "The proper name *Atithigva* has so far as is known, never been translated. Grassmann's *gva* 'going' does not yield appreciable sense.
>
> If we analyse structurally *atithi-gv-a* 'he who has or offers a cow for the guest', 'he who is hospitable', we have a normal compound, normal sense, and a valuable glimpse of Vedic house-practices, known hitherto only in the Brāhmaṇas and Sūtras. At the *arghya* ceremony, which is performed on the arrival of an honoured guest, the 'preparation' of a cow is the central feature. The technical expression is *gām kurute* : see CGS. ii.15.1 ; AGS. i.24.30.31 ; PGS. i.3.26.30 ; Gobh. iv.10.1 ; ApGS. 13.15 ; HGS. i.13.10 ; ApDhS. ii.4.8.5. In TS. vi.1.10.1 the ceremony goes by the name *go-argha*. There is no reason why this simple and natural practice should not be reflected by the hymns, and it comports with the character of Atithigva as a generous giver ; cf. vi.47.22 ; x.48.8 ; i.130.7 ; also similar statements in reference to descendants of Atithigva in viii.68.16.17. The adjective *atithin* is a hapax legamenon in RV. x.68.3 ; it occurs in the expression *atithinīr gāḥ* ; and, whatever it may mean, it suggests forcibly the proper name in question. The rendering of *atithin* by 'wandering', as given by the Petersburg lexicons and Grassmann, is based upon the supposed etymology (root *at* 'wander'), and reflects the vagueness usual with such interpretations. Ludwig's translation (972) 'wie gaste kommend' is a compromise between the etymology and the ordinary meaning of *atithi*. The passage in question reads : 'Bṛhaspati has divided out like barley from bushels the (rain-) cows propitious to the pious, fit for guests (*atithin*), strong, desirable, beautiful in colour, faultless in form, after having conquered them from the clouds.' The proper name *atithi-gv-a* means therefore precisely one who has *atithinīr gāḥ*."

Prof. Bloomfield gives the technical term गां कुरुते for the 'preparation of a cow' in the *arghya* rites ; and in support thereof he has cited a number of sūtra texts. The expression गां कुरुते is not

found in these sūtra texts. It is just possible that the references of Gṛhya-sūtras through oversight are not correctly recorded and/or printed or the wordings in place of गां कुरुते may slightly differ in the original texts; for example: Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.24.23 reads आचान्तोदकाय गां वेदयन्ते Gobhila-gṛhya-sūtra reads मुञ्च गां वरुणपाशाद्द्विषन्तं मेऽभिधेहि (4.10.19) and कुरुतेत्यधियज्ञम् (4.10.22); Āpastambīya-Dharma-sūtra 2.4.8.5 reads गोमधुपर्कार्हो वेदाध्यायः But a number of sūtra texts from among them have been interpreted as putting forth *madhuparka* with meat. These passages have already been discussed under the headings 'Paraskara-gṛhya-sūtra and Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra'.

Prof. Bloomfield has taken *Atithigva* अतिथिग्व as the proper name of a person who is described as a noble generous giver, and he has cited Ṛgveda 6.47.22 (6.4.4.22), 10.48.8 (10.4.6.8) and 1.130.7 (1.19.4.7) in support. In the English translations of these mantras Griffith and Wilson have also taken it as the name of a person and not as 'cow-slaughterer'. Their English translations are as quoted below:

RV. 6.47.22 (6.4.4.20)

Griffith : Out of the bounty, Indra, hath Prastoka bestowed ten coffers and ten mettled horses. We have received in turn from Divodāsa Sambara's wealth, the gift of Atithigva.

Wilson : Prastoka has given to thy worshipper, Indra, ten purses of gold, and ten horses, and we have accepted this treasure from Divodāsa, the spoil won by Atithigvan from Shambara.

RV. 10.48.8 (10.4.6.8)

Griffith : Against the Guṅgus I made Atithigva strong, and kept him mid the folk like Vṛtra-conquering strength; when I won glory in the great foe-slaying fight, in battle where Karañja fell, and Parnaya.

Wilson : I prepared Atithigva for (the protection of) the Guṅgus, I upheld him, the destroyer of enemies, as sustance

amongst the people; when I gained renown in the great Vṛtra-battle, in which Parnaya and Karañja were slain.

RV. 1.130.7 (1.19.4.7)

Griffith : For Puru thou hast shattered, Indra, ninety forts, for Divodāsa thy boon servant with thy bolt, O Dancer, for thy worshipper.

For Atithigva he, the Strong, brought Śambara from the mountain down.

Distributing the mighty treasure with his strength, parting all treasures with his strength.

Wilson : For Puru, the giver of offerings, for the mighty Divodāsa; thou, Indra the dancer (with delight in battle), hast destroyed ninety cities, dancer (in battle), thou hast destroyed them with (thy thunderbolt) for (the sake of) the giver of offerings. For (the sake of) Atithigva, the fierce (Indra) hurled Śambara from off the mountain bestowing (upon the prince) immense treasure, (acquired) by (his) prowess; all kinds of wealth (acquired) by (his) prowess.

The meaning of the word *atithigva* (अतिथिग्व) has been given in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary as under :—

'To whom guests should go'

Besides this, no other meaning has been given. There is not even the slightest inkling of cow-slaughter in this meaning. Therefore, the noun *atithigva* (अतिथिग्व) can never imply 'to slaughter a cow for a guest'; or 'a guest who gets a cow slaughtered'.

Shri Kanhaiyalal Maniklal Munshi, Chairman of Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, in his Hindi novel 'Lopāmudrā', page 34, lines 16-17 has indicated *Atithigva* as a particular person and has interpreted this word as 'one who serves beef to a guest', while Prof. Bloomfield,

after analysing this word structurally *atithi-gv-a* has interpreted it as 'he who has or offers a cow for the guest' or 'he who is hospitable' and Monier-Williams has interpreted it in his Dictionary as 'to whom guest should go'. Shri K. M. Munshi in interpreting it as 'one who serves beef to a guest' has given neither any etymology nor other testimony nor has Atithigva been shown in the story as actually serving beef to a guest. When a person of the standing of Shri K. M. Munshi propagates in this manner, then there is no wonder if ordinary public is misled.

Those who insist to find cow-slaughter in *atithigva* (अतिथिग्व) and *atithinir gāḥ* (अतिथिनीर्गाः) are clearly prejudiced. The basis of their prejudice is the predilection of Western scholars like Keith, Macdonell and others who are insistent in their efforts to prove that the Aryans were uncivilized.

The expression *atithinir gāḥ*—अतिथिनीर्गाः (अतिथिनीः+गाः) occurs in Ṛgveda 10.68.3 whose meaning has been clarified by Bloomfield in the Journal of the American Oriental Society. The original mantra reads :

साध्वर्या अतिथिनीरिषिराः स्पार्हाः सुवर्णा अनवद्यरूपाः ।
बृहस्पतिः पर्वतेभ्यो वितूर्या निर्गा ऊपे यवमिव स्थिविभ्यः ॥

(ऋग्वेद १०.६८.३)

After resolution of the *sandhis* this will read as follows :

8 9 10 11 12 13
साध्वर्याः, अतिथिनीः, इषिराः, स्पार्हाः, सुवर्णाः, अनवद्यरूपाः,
1 15 14 2 7 3 5
बृहस्पतिः, पर्वतेभ्यः, वितूर्या, निर्, गाः, ऊपे, यवम्,
4 6
इव, स्थिविभ्यः ।

The literal meaning of this as given by Prof. Bloomfield in the Journal of the American Oriental Society is as follows :

(1. बृहस्पतिः) Bṛhaspati (2. निर्, 3. ऊपे) has divided out (4. इव) like (5. यवम्) barley (6. स्थिविभ्यः) from the bushels (7. गाः)

the (rain-)cows (8. साध्वर्याः) (which are) propitious to the pious, (9. अतिथिनीः) fit for the guest, (10. इषिराः) strong, (11. स्पार्हाः) desirable, (12. सुवर्णाः) beautiful in colours, (13. अनवद्यरूपाः) faultless in form (14. वितूर्या) after having conquered them (15. पर्वतेभ्यः) from the clouds.

H. H. Wilson has translated it as under :

"Bṛhaspati brings unto (the gods), after extricating them from the mountains, the cows that are the yielders of pure (milk), ever in motion, the objects of search and of desire, well-coloured and of unexceptionable form, (as men bring) barley from the granaries." (RV. x.5.8.3.)

And Ralph T. H. Griffith has translated it as follows :

"Bṛhaspati, having won them from the mountains, strewed down, like barley out of winnowing-baskets, the vigorous wandering cows who aid the pious, desired of all, of blameless form, well-coloured."

In both these English translations of the Ṛgveda mantra, no-where is there any indication that the words *aitihinih* and *gāḥ* suggest the meaning of 'a guest who causes the slaughter of a cow'. Bloomfield's interpretation of the words *atithigva* and *atithinirgāḥ* in the Journal of the American Oriental Society also does not indicate even a remote hint of cow-slaughter and to the contrary he has taken them as proper names.

The word *atithini* (अतिथिनी) can be formed only by adding the possessive suffix-*ini*. Meanings with the possessive suffix can be 'with a guest' ; 'one whose the guests are' ; 'one for whom the guests come' ; 'one who is useful to guests' etc. and the cow can be useful to the guests only by her milk, curd, ghee etc. If one contends that she can also be useful by her beef, then she will be useful only once for a guest and it will become impossible for a man of common status to slaughter a new cow every time he receives a guest. Reception of guests is as important to a common man as it is to an affluent person.

Taking into account all these considerations, *atithinirgāḥ* will mean 'cows fit for guests, i.e. for serving them with milk, yoghurt, ghee, etc.', and *atithigva* will mean 'the person to whom a guest should go', i.e., a host whose hospitality with milk products a guest should accept.

Culinary Impossibility of Mixing Meat with Madhuparka

Late Pt. Shripād Damodar Sātavalekar has written in the section on *Madhuparka*, in his '*Go-Jñana-Koṣa*, Ancient Period Vedic Section, Part I, which is translated below :—

"We do not know it fully as none in our family has ever tasted meat, as we have been strict vegetarians. Even then we have enquired from our non-vegetarian friends who have informed us that no preparation of meat is prepared with honey or candy-sugar. Whatsoever preparations of meat are, they are all salted and spiced. If this is true, then how can *madhuparka* be prepared with meat ? Because it is *madhuparka*, i.e. it is a sweet preparation mixed (पर्क) with honey (मधु). Nothing is prepared from meat by mixing it with honey or candy-sugar, but meat is always mixed with salt and spices."

To verify its truth, we wrote and enquired from the Institute of Hotel Management, Catering and Nutrition ; and a number of hoteliers. Their replies are reproduced hereunder :

Institute of Hotel Management, Catering and Nutrition, Pusa, New Delhi-12 writes in its letter No. ICT/PA/2/69/192, dated 25-1-69 :

"No popular or famous dishes have been prepared so far out of meat and sugar in classical French, Indian or English cookery. Of course, this does not mean that the sweet meat preparations cannot be prepared, but the problem that has to be faced is the consumer's acceptibility and market potentiality."

It is clear from the above that no sweet dish is prepared with meat. If prepared, consumers will not relish it and it will be difficult to sell it.

Hotel Oberoi Intercontinental, Wellesley Road, New Delhi-11 writes in its letter dated 11-2-1969 :

"I would like to point out that no sweet meat preparations are made by us and whatsoever no meat is used for our dessert preparations."

From this also it is evident that no sweet is prepared with meat ; meat is not mixed in any sweet dish ; and meat preparations are only salted and spiced. An honoured guest is entertained only by serving what is most delicious and what he likes best. When in the refinement of culinary art there is no sweet dish prepared with or from meat, then how is it possible that meat should have been added to *madhuparka* at the reception of an honoured guest ?

Some people add a little sugar to salted spiced vegetable preparations, but it cannot be maintained on this basis that vegetable preparations are sweet. Nobody will relish vegetables prepared with sugar alone. In the same way if somebody perchance adds a little sugar to salted and spiced meat preparations, then they do not become meat containing sweets. Salt or spices are not mentioned among the ingredients of *madhuparka*. In such circumstances, mixing of meat in *madhuparka* will be a sweet meat preparation devoid of salt and spices which has neither been seen nor heard of so far. Then it is beyond comprehension, how an honoured guest would relish the addition of meat to *madhuparka*. If we apply our minds seriously, then the mixing of meat in *madhuparka* is impossible.

Madhuparka System in Siberia

Doctor Lokesh Chandra, Director of Saraswati Vihar (International Academy of Indian Culture), New Delhi and son of late Dr. Raghavira,

the well known Indologist, has given an instance of his experience with *madhuparka*, which is narrated below in his own words :—

> "Deep in the heart of Eastern Siberia lies the Aginsky Monastery which has been renowned for its inexhaustible manuscript resources and unparalleled scholarship. Till the thirties of our century it continued the academic and spiritual traditions of the Nalanda University. On the midnight of 14/15 June 1967 we reached this Aginsky Monastery, a legend for those who have taken interest in Eastern Siberia, in her thought and her deep traditions. For the first time in our life we were received in national style with *madhuparka* comprising of yoghurt (*dahi*), milk and honey in silver spoons from silver vessels."

This shows that even meat-eaters of Russian Siberia do not include any kind of meat in *madhuparka* and as such it is beyond doubt that there is not even an inkling of meat in *madhuparka* and the statement that *madhuparka* is never without meat is baseless and wrong.

Conclusion

It is clear from the above considerations that there is no possibility of mixing meat in *madhuparka*. Due to shortage of time, even the possibility of preparing milk-rice-pudding (पायस) then and there and serving it to entertain the guest is rather slight. It may be possible that parched barley (*sattu*) besides milk, curd and ghee was mixed with *madhuparka* as is prescribed in Baudhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.2.54 (अश्नती पिष्टान्न संसिद्धयेत्) and Hiraṇyakeśi-gṛhya-sūtra 1.12.10. Even nowadays in the countryside of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, guests coming from far-off places at summer time are served with parched barley (*sattu*) dissolved in water mixed with sugar.

WERE COW-SLAUGHTER, MEAT SACRIFICE AND MEAT-EATING PREVALENT IN THE VEDIC AGE ?

By constant propaganda it has been dinned into the minds of several people that during the Vedic age killing was a part of *yajña*, even cows were slaughtered, beef and other kinds of meat were commonly eaten ; and the total prohibition of killing (*ahiṁsā*) came into vogue in the Buddhist and Jain period. It is true that before the Buddhist and Jain period, by misunderstanding, killing became prevalent among people to some measure, but it is totally false that in the Vedic age there was killing in *yajña*, or meat-eating prevailed. A number of people think that the cow is considered *aghnyā* (अघ्न्या) 'un-killable' in the Vedas, but there is no prohibition regarding the killing of other animals and hence animals were slaughtered in the *yajñas*—this assumption also is false.

The high respect accorded to the cow in Vedic times has been described in details by the late Pandit Shripad Damodar Satavalekar in his *Go-jñāna-kośa* (published by the Svadhyaya Mandal, Anand-ashram, P.O. Pardi, Dist. Balsar, Gujarat), by Pandit Dinanath Sharma in his Śrī-sanatana-dharmāloka, and by Pandit Dharmadev Vidya-vacaspati in his Vedon kā Yathārtha Svarūpa(published by the Gurukul Kangri University). A few extracts are being cited here which clearly prove that in Vedic times there was neither cow-slaughter, nor beef-eating, nor the killing of other animals and the eating of their meat. Those who want to go into greater details they should study the three works just referred to.

The Inviolability of the Cow

By a careful reflection of the Vedic mantras it becomes clear that the cow is inviolable. This has been spoken of in a number of ways in the Vedic mantras. In the Veda, the very name of 'a cow and bull' is *aghnya* (अघ्न्य). It means 'inviolable'. Whose name itself is 'inviolable', its cutting up or slaughter is impossible. Vedic words are full of meaning, they are significant, and intrinsically relevant.

Therefore whose name is *aghnyā* अघ्न्या or 'inviolable', its slaughter is impossible in Vedic times. And without slaughter, the offering of beef in *havan* is altogether impossible. The hypothesis of the slaughter of cows and the offering of beef in *gomedha* are all figments without any foundation.

Thus the word *go* has several meanings like, cow, her milk, her yoghurt, her butter, her sour-milk, her ghee, her urine, her dung, her hide, her hair, her bone, etc. In the Veda it is used chiefly in the sense of 'milk' and 'ghee'. This is specially to be borne in mind.

गोभिः श्रीणीत मत्सरं । Rg. 9.46.4

The literal meaning of this *mantra* is : 'mix (*śrīṇīta* श्रीणीत) *soma* (*matsaram* मत्सरम्) with the cows (*gobhiḥ* गोभिः)'. The words literally convey that mix the whole of *soma* with a whole cow. But here it means : 'mix *soma*-juice with the milk of a cow'. Here the whole has been used for its part. Milk is a part of the cow, and a part of *soma* is its juice. Here the mixing of these two parts alone is intended. Such was the idiom of Vedic speech. It is a mode of language. If this mode is understood then no doubt remains.

If in this mantra we do not translate the word *go* as 'cow's milk', and interpret it as 'mix *soma* with a cow', then it has no congruency of meaning, because *soma* cannot be mixed with a cow by any means. The cow is a long and broad animal specy, and *soma* is the juice of a creeper. How can they be mixed ? *Soma* cannot be mixed with a living cow, nor with a whole dead cow. If the proponents of cow-slaughter and beef were still to insist that '*soma* can be mixed with the flesh of a cow after slaughtering her', then we shall have to set aside the real meaning of *gau* as a cow, but we will have to understand it in the secondary meaning of 'beef' as a figurative extension. In such a situation when we have to give up the real meaning of the word *gau* गौ as 'cow' and we are compelled to resort to its subsidiary meaning of 'beef', then why should we not take *gau* गौ as meaning 'cow's milk', which will be easier to mix with *soma* juice. Those who interpret it as 'beef' they will have to go to the length of taking it as

the meat of a dead cow'. It will be easier and more befitting than that if we interpret it as 'the milk of a living cow'. Because the principle is that the closer the subsidiary meaning to its primary the better it is to that extent.

The Primary Principle of the Veda

The primary principle of the Veda is to view all beings in friendly compassion. So we can say that those who saw all beings with friendly love, how could they slaughter others for their stomach ? Friendly love will lead to the dedication of one's own life for others, and it is impossible that the loved one is slaughtered for the stomach. The primary principle of the Veda is exemplified by the following :

1. मित्रस्य मा चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षन्ताम् ।
   May all beings behold me with the eyes of a friend.
   मित्रस्याहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे ।
   I behold all beings with the eyes of a friend.
   मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे ।
   We behold each other with the eyes of a friend.
   (Vājasanehi-saṁhitā 36.18)

2. मित्रस्य चक्षक्षुषा समीक्षध्वम् । (मैत्रायणी संहिता ४.६.२७)
   Behold all with the eyes of a friend. (Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā 4.9.27)

3. प्रियः पशूनां भूयासम् । (अथर्ववेद १७.१.४)
   May I be dear to all animals. (Atharvaveda 17.1.4)

4. दृते दृंह मा मित्रस्य मा चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षन्ताम् ।
   मित्रस्याऽहं चक्षुषा सर्वाणि भूतानि समीक्षे ।
   मित्रस्य चक्षुषा समीक्षामहे । (यजुर्वेद ३६.१८)

O Dispeller of all pangs and ignorance (दृते) strengthen me (दृंह मा). May all beings (सर्वाणि भूतानि) regard (समीक्षन्ताम्) me (मा)

with the eye of a friend (मित्रस्य चक्षुषा). May I regard (अहं समीक्षे) all beings (सर्वाणि भूतानि) with the eye of a friend (मित्रस्य चक्षुषा). May all of us regard (समीक्षामहे) each other with the eye of a friend (मित्रस्य चक्षुषा). (Yajurveda 36.18)

This is the commandment of the Veda. Here it admonishes us not only to regard all men with the eye of a friend, but the entire gamut of sentient beings. Then should one kill one's friend for one's stomach. If he is to be killed, then where is the friendly eye. The Vedic people who followed the prime principle of the Veda to regard all beings or the entire sentient world with the eye of a friend, could never even imagine to slaughter them to eat. So it will have to be accepted that due to some extraneous causes meat-eating intruded into the Aryans. The natural diet of the Aryans was vegetarian.

In the Bhāgavata-mahāpurāṇa 7.14.9 we find the same assertion :

मृगोष्ट्रखरमर्काखुसरीसृप्खगमक्षिकाः ।
आत्मनः पुत्रवत् पश्येत् तैरेषामन्तरं कियत् ॥ (श्रीम० भा० ७.१४.९)

"Deer, camel, donkey, monkey, rats, creeping animals, birds, and flies—one should consider them like one's own sons ; what difference is there between them and the sons ?" (Śrimad-Bhāgavata 7.14.9)

नैतादृशः परो धर्मो नृणां सद्धर्ममिच्छताम् ।
न्यासो दण्डस्य भूतेषु मनोवाक्कायजस्य यः ॥
(श्रीम. भा. ७.१५.८)

"For men seeking true piety there is no other such virtue as abstinence from violence to living beings, perpetrated through mind, speech and body." (Śrimad-Bhāgavata 7.15.8)

Ahiṁsā in the Veda

The Veda enjoins the non-killing not of the cow alone, but it calls upon the non-killing of all the bipeds and quadrupeds. The prime

principle of the Veda is to view all beings with the eye of a friend. Consider the following supporting passages :

यजमानस्य पशून् पाहि ॥ यजुर्वेद १.१
मा हिंसीस्तन्वा प्रजाः ॥ यजुर्वेद १२.३२
अश्वं ...... मा हिंसीः ...... ॥ यजुर्वेद १३.४२
अविं ...... मा हिंसीः ...... ॥ यजुर्वेद १३.४४
इमं मा हिंसीर्द्विपादं पशुम् ॥ यजुर्वेद १३.४७
इमं मा हिंसीः ...... वाजिनम् ॥ यजुर्वेद १३.४८
इममूर्णायुं .... मा हिंसीः ॥ यजुर्वेद १३.५०
मा हिंसीः पुरुषम् ॥ यजुर्वेद १६.३
मा हिंसिष्टं द्विपदो मा चतुष्पदः ॥ अथर्ववेद ११.२.१

"Do not kill any of the creatures, like the horse, goat, bipeds, quadrupeds, wool-giving animals and human beings." Reading these mantras alongwith those propounding the principle of the friendly eye, the Vedic admonition of non-killing (*ahiṁsā*) will become apparently clear. View the generality of sentient beings with a friendly eye, and never kill them—this is the admonition of the Veda to men. Inspite of such a clear injunction, Europeans constrain to think that non-killing (*ahiṁsā*) was not so strict in the Veda as it became in later times.

Pandit Dharmadeva Vidya-vachaspati has given a clear exposition of non-killing (*ahiṁsā*) in the Vedas on pages 498-499 of his book Vedon kā Yathārth Svarūp (published by the Gurukul Kangri Haridwar). A few extracts from it are cited below :

बृहद्भिर्भानुभिर्भासन् मा हिंसीस्तन्वा प्रजाः ॥ यजु० १२.३२ ॥

"May you be illumined by the mighty rays of knowledge (बृहद्भिः भानुभिः भासन्) and may you not kill (मा हिंसीः) the creatures (प्रजाः) by your body (तन्वा)". (Yajurveda 12.32)

ये रात्रिमनुतिष्ठन्ति ये च भूतेषु जाग्रति ।
पशून् ये सर्वान् रक्षन्ति ते न आत्मसु जाग्रति ते नः पशुषु जाग्रति ॥
(अथर्ववेद १९.४८.५)

"Those noble souls who practise meditation and other yogic ways, who are ever careful about all beings, who protect all animals, they also care for our spiritual progress. They always take care that our behaviour does not afflict any animal". (Atharva-Veda 19.48.5)

प्रियः पशूनां भूयासम् । (अथर्ववेद १७.४)

"May I be dear to the animals". (Atharvaveda 17.4)

One who protects the animals, and regards them with a kindly heart, he alone can be dear to them, and not one who slaughters them —this is quite clear.

It may be acceded to, that the totally complete and singularly unqualified non-killing (*ahiṁsā*) propagated by the Jains and Buddhists is not found to such a degree in the Veda, but it is unreasonable to say that the principle of non-killing (*ahiṁsā*) did not exist in the Veda. The Veda preaches *ahiṁsā* alone as the common norm of behavior, but in special circumstances like war it does not enjoin to refrain from killing. Veda enjoins *ahiṁsā* of a type in which killing necessitated by a great national war is not ruled out. But should one desire to kill others for his stomach, such killing is not permitted by the Veda. The readers should clearly bear this difference in mind. In fact, it is the Vedas alone that propound the true principle of non-killing (*ahiṁsā*). So the Aryas who follow the Veda try to save the insects moving on the road, and if some are crushed by oversight that horrifies them and they recede back uttering 'Rām Rām—राम राम' in repentance, and they also safeguard sparrows and pigeons who lay eggs in their houses.

A number of modern scholars think that in the Vedic age the cow was surely killed at *gomedha*. They adduce in proof that the

Kalivarjya sections prohibit *gomedha* in this Kali-age. But they entirely forget that in the Zend Avesta scriptures of the Parsis, there is surely no cow-slaughter in the *gomez yajña* which is equivalent to the Vedic *gomedha*, and in their *soma-yāga* also there is no slaughter, but the juice of the *soma* creeper alone is used. European scholars make a comparative study, but as soon as comparative studies prove *ahiṁsā* they give up this basis. When the *gomez yajña* of the Parsis can be accomplished without cow-slaughter, then why not the *gomedha* of the Vedic Aryans.

Medha does not imply killing or slaughter at all. For instance we may cite the words *gṛhamedha* (गृहमेध) and *pitṛmedha* (पितृमेध). Just as honouring the father is intended in *pitṛmedha* (पितृमेध), and just as sanitary and other conditions of well-being of a house are explicity predominant in *gṛhamedha* (गृहमेध), likewise in *gomedha* too honouring of the cow and the preservation of her health were naturally desired. Manu has also said :

अध्यापनं ब्रह्मयज्ञः पितृयज्ञस्तु तर्पणम् ।
होमो दैवो बलिर्भौतो नृयज्ञोऽतिथिपूजनम् ॥ (मनुस्मृति ३, ७०)

"Teaching is *brahma-yajña* (ब्रह्मयज्ञ), pleasing the parents is *pitṛ-medha* (पितृमेध), offering of *homa* is *deva-yajña* (देवयज्ञ) offering of food to worms and insects is *bhūta-yajña* (भूतयज्ञ), and honouring the guests is *nṛ-yajña—nara-medha* (नृयज्ञ—नरमेध)". (Manu 3.70)

Vedic Names of the Cow

The Vedic lexicon Nighaṇṭu gives nine synonyms of the cow. Out of them the following three bear the meaning 'not to be killed'.

1. *aghnyā* (अ—घ्न्या)=not to be killed.
2. *ahī* (अ—ही) =not to be killed.
3. *aditi* (अ—दिति) =not to be cut to pieces.

These three synonyms clearly indicate that the cow should not be slaughtered. First we showed that the names of *yajñas* imply non-killing (*ahiṁsā*), now we see that the synonyms of the cow show the

means non-killing. The intrinsic meaning of the synonyms of the cow itself proclaims that the cow is holy, and therefore she should never be slaughtered. The same meaning is the basis of a stanza in the Mahābhārata :

अघ्न्या इति गवां नाम क एता हन्तुमर्हति ।
महच्चकाराकुशलं वृषं गां वाऽऽलभेत् तु यः ॥ (म.भा.शां० २६२.४७)

"The very name of the cows is *aghnyā* that is the cow is not to be slaughtered. Then who can slay them. Those who kill a cow or a bull, they commit a most heinous crime".

(Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva 262.47)

Synonyms of Yajña

From among the synonyms of *yajña*, the word *adhvara*, (अध्वर) occurs in several mantras of the Veda. Its very meaning is 'non-killing'. The word *dhvara* (ध्वर) denotes killing (ध्वरा हिंसा तदभावो यत्र स अध्वरः), it is prohibited by the word *a-dhvara*. The presence of the word *a-dhvara* meaning 'non-killing' among the synonyms of *yajña* proves that any type of killing is not appropriate in a *yajña* or *medha*. The word *medha* (मेध) has three meanings : 'increasing intelligence ; attending ; and killing' (मेधृ हिंसासंगमने च). The word *medha* has a nuance of killing, but it also signifies 'increasing ; attending'. Thus the etymological meanings of *go-medha* (गो-मेध) can be : (1) increasing the cows, (2) attending the cows, and (3) killing the cows. The readers themselves should consider which of the three meanings is intended. By association with the word *a-dhvara* (अध्वर) 'non-killing' for a *yajña* the idea of cow-killing has to be discarded, and the other two meanings remain. Rearing the cows, multiplying them and eugenic cow-breeding is meant by 'attending the cows'. All these are comprehended by *gomedha* (गोमेध) but not cow-killing ; this is clear even by considering just the synonyms of *yajña*.

Prohibition of Cow-Slaughter

गां मा हिंसीरदितिं विराजम् ॥ ४३ ॥
घृतं दुहानामदितिं जनाय''मा हिंसीः ॥ ४९ ॥ (यजुर्वेद १३)

"The cow is illustrious and inviolable, therefore do not slay her (Yajurveda 13.43). The cow is inviolabe and she yields ghee for the people, therefore do not slay the cow. (Yajurveda 13.49)". Thus, slaughter of cows is prohibited, it is a clear injunction against killing them.

The Incomparable Cow

The Veda enjoins that for everything else there is a comparison but the cow is beyond comparison ; so many are the beneficences conferred by her on man. For it, see the following mantra :

ब्रह्म सूर्यसमं ज्योतिर्द्यौः समुद्रसमं सरः ॥
इन्द्रः पृथिव्यै वर्षीयान् गोस्तु मात्रा न विद्यते ॥ (यजु० २३.४८)

"The effulgence of knowledge can be compared to the sun, the Heavens (द्युलोक) can be compared to the sea, the earth is very vast, yet Indra is vaster than her, but the cow cannot be compared to anything."

(Yajurveda 23.48)

Behold ! how the Vedas describe the loftiness of the cow. Though the word *gau* (गो) is used for the earth also, but in the above mantra the word *gau* (गो) stands for the cow alone, and the passage expresses its (cow's) incomparability in so many words.

Advantages of the Cow

दुहामश्विभ्यां पयो अघ्न्येयं सा वर्धतां महते सौभगाय ॥
(ऋ० १.१६४.२७)

"May this inviolable cow yield milk for both the Aśvins, and may she prosper for our great good fortune" (Ṛg 1.164.27)." In this mantra it is said that may the inviolable cow prosper (सा अघ्न्या वर्धताम्) this mantra deserves careful reflection. Mr. Griffith translates it as 'and may she prosper to our high advantage'. When this mantra proves that the increase of cows leads to the growth of our fortune, then whence arises the possibility of slaughtering the cow ?

The numerical increase of the cow and the enhancement of its quality leads to numerous advantages for man—this has been propounded by the Veda without reservations and in several ways. Such great importance was attached to the cow in Vedic times. So we can say that in Vedic times efforts of the pious were directed to the improvement of the cow. Also see Ṛg-veda 1.164.40 :

सूयवसाद् भगवती हि भूया अथो वयं भगवन्तः स्याम ।
अद्धि तृणमघ्न्ये विश्वदानीं पिब शुद्धमुदकमाचरन्ती ॥
(ऋ० १.१६४.४०)

"May the cow eat the best of grass, may she be blessed, and by her may we also be blessed with wealth. O inviolable cow (अघ्न्ये) ! ever feed on grass (तृणं अद्धि) and coming back (आ-चरन्ती) drink pure water (शुद्धं उदकं पिब).

What the cow should be fed has been clearly spoken of in the mantra. The cow should eat grass alone, and when a cow is kept there should be such arrangements as she gets the best grass. Milk obtained from a cow that eats the best grass and drinks pure water—that alone is health-bestowing for man. The milk which is obtained from a cow fed on fried dishes, grains, decaying produce and human excreta, etc—that cannot be so wholesome.

The following mantra is note-worthy in this respect :

यावतीनामोषधीनां गावः प्राश्नन्त्यघ्न्या यावतीनामजावयः ।
तावतीस्तुभ्यमोषधीः शर्म यच्छन्त्वाभृताः ॥ (अथर्ववेद ८.७.२५)

"All the herbs that inviolable cows feed on, and all those on which goats and sheep feed, may all of them increase your well-being." Griffith has translated the word *aghnyā* (अघ्न्या) as 'whom none may slaughter'. If the word *aghnyā* (अघ्न्या) standing for the 'cow' has this meaning, and her slaughter is not proper then on what basis do European scholars opine that beaf-eating was prevalent among the Aryans ?

Animals in Yajña

Whatever man offered to the gods in *yajña*, that he ate himself—on this basis European scholars have written :

"The usual food of the Vedic Indian, as far as flesh was concerned, can be gathered from the list of sacrificial victims ; what man ate he presented to gods—i.e. the sheep, the goat and the ox". (Vedic Index, Vol. II, page 147, lines 10-13).

It means that all the offered animals were slaughtered and eaten. It appears from what follows in the Vedic Index that according to the Europeans the horse was killed at *aśvamedha*, but they have specified that the Vedic Aryans mostly did not eat horse-meat. It is really considerate of the Europeans that they have spared the Aryans from eating horse-meat. Because of the general European belief that what was offered at *yajña* was eaten, and that the horse was slaughtered at *yajna*, it was difficult for the Aryans to be spared from it. But in the book 'Vedic Index' it is clearly stated that horse-meat was not eaten—so we tender them our thanks.

If Europeans concede the exceptions that inspite of human sacrifice at *narmedha* (नरमेध) human meat was not consumed, and inspite of the sacrifice of a horse at *aśvamedha*, horse-meat also was not eaten, then what objection do they have to accept the fact that the flesh of other animals was also not partaken of. Now remains the question of animal-offering in the Vedic *yajña*. Under the sub-head '*Ahiṁsā* (non-violence) in the Veda' and 'Synonyms of Yajña', we have come to the conclusion that in the Vedic *yajña* there was no slaughter or offering of animals ; and as a general rule violence to all beings is forbidden in the Vedas.

According to Ralph T. H. Griffith's translation, Atharva-Veda provides that :

(i) "Horses are the grains ; Oxen the winnowed rice-grains ; gnats the husks (अश्वाः कणा, गावस्तण्डुला, मशकास्तुषाः । 11.3.5

(ii) The grains of corn have now become a cow ; the sesamum her calf (धाना धेनुरभवद् वत्सोऽस्यास्तिलोऽभवत्) 18.4.32."

The above quotations indicate that wherever prescriptions of oblation of cow are apparent, there they mean only corn (barley), rice, sesamum etc. and not animal flesh.

According to Mimāṅsā-darśana—धेनुवच्चाश्वदक्षिणा सब्रह्मण इति पुरुषापनयो यथा हिरण्यस्य 10.3.65—a Brāhmaṇa takes away a cow or horse as a gift (दक्षिणा) just as he does in the case of gold *dakṣiṇā*. This proves that in *yajña*, cows and horses were assembled for giving away to Brāhmaṇas in *dakṣiṇā*.

Cattle Exhibitions at Yajña

Here it must be pointed out that the meaning 'to come together' of the root *medhṛ* (मेधृ) is supported by several episodes of *yajñas* in the Mahābhārata. For instance, in the Aśvamedha-parva of the Mahābhārata it is narrated as follows : (The references of chapter and verse numbers are from Gita Press edition followed by Bhandarkar Research Institute edition).

स्थलजा जलजा ये च पशवः केचन प्रभो ।
सर्वानेव समानीतान् अपश्यंस्तत्र ते नृपाः ॥ 85.32; 87.6
गाश्चैव महिषीश्चैव तत्र वृद्धस्त्रियोऽपि च ।
औदकानि च सत्त्वानि श्वापदानि वयांसि च ॥ 85.33; 87.7
जरायुजाण्डजातानि स्वेदजान्युद्भिदानि च ।
पर्वतानूपजातानि भूतानि ददृशुश्च ते ॥ 85.34; 87.8
एवं प्रमुदितं सर्वं पशुगोधनधान्यतः ।
यज्ञवाटं नृपा दृष्ट्वा परं विस्मयमागताः ॥ 85.35; 87.9

"In the pavilion of the *yajña*, people saw all kinds of land and water animals which had been brought there. There were several kinds of cows, she-buffalos, old women, water creatures, beasts of

prey and birds. Viviparous and ovoparous creatures, creatures born of sweat and plants of mountainous and lacustrine regions—all were to be seen there. Thus seeing the pavilion abundant in animals, cows, wealth and grains, and filled with joy, the kings were in ecstacy."

This clearly proves that exhibitions were held at *gomedha*, *naramedha*, *aśvamedha* and *avimedha*, etc.

Meat Sacrifice

Whether meat should be used in the *yajña* or not is a different matter. Our opinion is that *yajñas* were without meat, but for argument's sake if we consider *yajñas* with meat, then we will come to know that the modern altar (vedi—वेदी) of the *yajña* is two-fold :

(1) *pūrva* altar, and
(2) *uttara* altar.

In the *pūrva* altar there were several altars in which only grain was offered, and meat is never mentioned. Meat is said to be offered only in the *uttara* altar. If the two adjectives of altar, *pūrva* and *uttara*, are understood as 'ancient times' (*pūrva-kāla*) and 'later times' (*uttara-kāla*, then it is clearly proved that only grains were offered on the ancient (*pūrva*) altar, and meat began to be offered on the later (*uttara*) altar.

The altar on which meat is offered nowadays, that is the later altar. *Uttara-vedi* clearly means the altar that came into vogue in later times, i.e. in the ancient *yajñas*, this altar did not exist at all. The altars which existed in ancient times, the *pūrva* (ancient) altars are still found. In the *pūrva* altar only pure grain is offered, and meat is offered on the *uttara* altar. Not only that, but first the offering of grains was completely finished on the *pūrva* altars, and then offering on the meat-altar started. Meat is never offered in the early part of the *yajña*, only grains are offered, and in the later days of *yajña* meat is offered in the *uttara* altar.

It is clearly proved that in very ancient times, the *yajña* was performed at *pūrva* altars on which only grains were offered, and the offering of later times comprised of the offering of meat at the *uttara* altar. If somebody insists that meat *yajñas* were prevalent during the period of the Brāhmanas, then he will have to agree to the fact that this was not the vogue in ancient times and only meat-less *yajñas* were prevalent in those days.

If meat *yajñas* began in later times, it was to prevent meat-greedy men of sinister nature to continue this disposition. With this end in view it must have been ordained that if meat has to be eaten then partake of it only in *yajñas*, so as to save daily slaughter. This seems to be the intent of the following stanza of the Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāna 11.21.29 :

ते मे मतमविज्ञाय परोक्षं विषयात्मकाः ।
हिंसायां यदि रागः स्याद् यज्ञ एव न चोदना ॥
(श्रीम० भा० ११.२१.२९)

Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa said to Udhava—

"Not knowing My implicit view, if sensuous men find pleasure in violence, then they should indulge in it only in *yajña*".

From the above it is clear that it is not a general injunction. It has been ordained only for the purpose of putting a curb on sensuous pleasures and not as a general injunction to duty.

Lord Kṛṣṇa has said further :

हिंसाविहारा ह्यालब्धैः पशुभिः स्वसुखेच्छया ।
यजन्ते देवता यज्ञैः पितृभूतपतीन् खलाः ॥
(श्रीम० भा० ११.२१.३०)

"People who find enjoyment in violence, out of wickedness and for the gratification of their pleasures they slaughter animals, offer the

meat in *yajñas*, and thereby make a pretence of worshipping the gods, manes and rulers of evil spirit.

Śrīmad-Bhāgawata has stated clearly earlier also that animals killed in sacrifice take their revenge by devouring their killer in the next birth :

ये त्वनेवंविदोऽसन्तः स्तब्धाः सदभिमानिनः ।
पशून द्रुह्यन्ति विस्रब्धाः प्रेत्य खादन्ति ते च तान् ॥
(श्रीमद्भागवत ११.५.१४)

"Those who are ignorant of this real Dharma (that is in *yajña*, the touching of animal is enjoined—not its killing—पशोः आलम्भनं—न हिंसा Śrīmad Bhāgavat 11.5.13) and though wicked and haughty, account themselves virtuous, kill animals without any feeling of remorse or fear of punishment, and are devoured by those very animals in their next birth." (Śrīmad Bhāgvata 11.5.14)

In the Mahābhārata also, which is considered as a fifth Veda, animal killing is prohibited in yajña :

इज्यायज्ञश्रुतिकृतैर्यो मार्गैरबुधोऽधमः ।
हन्याज्जन्तून् मांसगृध्नुः स वै नरकभाङ्नरः ॥
(Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana-parva 115.43 : 116.45)

The wretch among men who, pretending to follow the path of religious rites and *yajnās* laid down in the Veda, would kill living creatures from greed of its flesh would certainly go to hell.

Persons indulging in 'meat sacrifice' were considered so low, that it was prohibited even to take food from their house :

दीक्षायाः पशुसंस्थायाः सौत्रामण्याश्च सत्तमाः ।
अन्यत्र दीक्षितस्यापि नान्नमश्नन् हि दुष्यति ॥
(श्रीमद्भागवत १०.२३.७)

O most righteous souls ! Indeed anyone eating the food cooked in the house even of a householder consecrated for a yajña other than one involving animal slaughter and different from the one known by the name Sautramani is not defiled (thereby).

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata X.23.8)

Kalivarjya Section

Some people assert that in the *kali-varjya* sections *aśvamedha*, *gomedha*, etc. are prohibited in the Kali age, therefore before this prohibition *aśvamedha* and *gomedha* were performed, and horse-meat was eaten at *aśvamedha* and beef during *gomedha*.

Now the question arises who has written this *kali-varjya* section, and in which text is it incorporated ? Is this found in a respectable authoritative work ? This is not found in the respectable authoritative smṛti works, therefore we cannot arrive at any special and potent conclusion from such an imaginary section.

The second point is that everything becomes clear when the chronology of the *kali-varjya* section is fixed. According to us, the *kalivarjya* section has been written within the last 700-800 years. Therefore this cannot regulate the entire past preceding it. Here too, there is the aforesaid defect of chronological incongruency.

Besides, if we accede that in the *kalivarjya* section, *aśvamedha* and *gomedha* are prohibited, even then we cannot come to know of the Vedic rites of *aśvamedha* or *gomedha*. It can only prove that before the writing of the *kalivarjya* section, meat *yajñas* were performed.

Yajñas of the Brāhmaṇa and Sūtra texts show additions and subtractions as compared to the *yajñas* of the period of the Vedic mantras. Certain items are not found in the *yajñas* of the mantra-saṁhitās, but they have been inserted later on. The reason is that in the *pūrva* altar, meat was not employed in offering, and in the offerings of the *uttara* altar, that is in the *yajña* ritual of later insertions, meat offering was employed. It was a custom of the times when the manual of *yajña* ritual was composed. The Vedic usage is only that which

has been prescribed in the metrical mantra portions. Therefore, we ask as to which Vedic mantra proves that the cow was slaughtered in the Vedic *gomedha* ; if there is even a single mantra, let anyone bring it forward. Gone are the days of accepting statements without proof. We know that now-a-days several scholars acquiesce into the contention that cows were slaughtered during *gomedha*, but here the question is not the status of persons who accept it : the scholars or the non-scholars. Here we have to consider as to what is attested by the Vedic mantras and what is not attested—this is the question here and it is this that we have to consider.

Punishment for Eating Meat

Those who eat meat, such carnivores have been termed *yātudhāna* (violent person of a fiendish disposition) by the Veda and it enjoins punishment to them :

यः पौरुषेयेण क्रविषा समङ्क्ते यो अश्व्येन पशुना यातुधानः ।
यो अघ्न्याया भरति क्षीरमग्ने तेषां शीर्षाणि हरसापि वृश्च ॥

(ऋग्वेद १०.८७.१६)

"One who partakes of human flesh, the flesh of a horse or of another animal, and deprives others of milk by slaughtering cows, O king ! if such a fiend does not desist by other means, then even cut off his head by your powers, this is the ultimate punishment which can be inflicted on him." (Ṛgveda X.87.16)

य आमं मांसमदन्ति पौरुषेयं च ये क्रविः ।
गर्भान् खादन्ति केशवास्तानितो नाशयामसि ॥ (अथर्व० ८.६.२३)

It is said in this mantra of the (Atharva-Veda VIII.6.23) that those who eat uncooked flesh, who eat meat cooked by men, who eat eggs that are embryos, do away with this evil addiction of theirs.

This very clearly proves that in the Vedas there is prohibition of meat-eating.

Evidence of The Mahābhārata

सुरा मत्स्या मधु मांसमासवं कृसरौदनम् ।
धूर्तैः प्रवर्तितं ह्येतन्नैतद् वेदेषु कल्पितम् ॥
(म.भा. शान्ति० २६५.९; २५७.९)

"Liquors, fish, mead, meat, spirits, rice cooked with sesamum (*til*) seeds—all these have been inserted into *yajña* by the wicked people. Vedas have not prescribed their use in *yajña*." (Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva 265.9 ; 257.9)

बीजैर्यज्ञेषु यष्टव्यमिति वै वैदिकी श्रुतिः ।
अजसंज्ञानि बीजानि छागं नो हन्तुमर्हथ ॥
नैष धर्मं सतां देवा यत्र वध्येत वै पशुः ॥
(म.भा. शान्ति० ३३७.४-५; ३२४.४-५)

"*Yajñas* should be performed with seeds—this is the Vedic tradition. *Aja* are a variety of seeds; therefore it is not proper to slaughter he-goats. Wherever there is animal-slaughter in *yajñas*, that is not the way of good men."
(Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva 337.4-5 ; 324.4-5)

Heinousness of Cow-Slaughter in the Manu-Smṛti

आचार्यं च प्रवक्तारं पितरं मातरं गुरुम् ।
न हिंस्याद् ब्राह्मणान् गांश्च सर्वांश्चैव तपस्विनः ॥
(मनु० ४.१६२)

"A teacher, propounder (of the scriptures), father, mother, guru, brahmaṇa, cow and ascetic—they should never be killed ;"
(Manu-smṛti 4.162)

The slaying of persons specified in the stanza has been equated with cow-slaughter. In other words it means that cow-slaughter is on par with murder of a teacher, propounder of the scriptures, father, mother, guru and brahmaṇa.

Heinousness of Cow-Slaughter in Christianity

'He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew a man'. (Isaiah 66/3)

According to English dictionaries, the word 'ox' stands for the male and female species of the bovine family.

Prohibition of Beef in Islam

Al-Ghazzāli (1058-1111 A.D.) was one of the most brilliant philosophers of Islam. At the age of 28, he headed the Institute of Islam at Baghdad. His chief book, '*Ihya Ulum ul-Din*'—'The Revival of Religious Sciences' is respected as highly as the Quran. Its Urdu translation has been published by the Navalkishore Press, Lucknow under the title *Mazākul Ārafin*. In its 1955 eddition (part 2, page 23, lines 17-19 the detrimental effects of beef, and the virtues of the ghee and milk of a cow are stated as follows :—

"the meat of a cow is disease (*marz*), its milk is health (*iafā*) and its ghee is medicine (*davā*)."

THE MEANING OF UKṢĀNNA AND VAŚĀNNA AND THE BARRENNESS OF THE VAŚĀ COW

In the 'Vedic Index', Vol. 2, page 145, under the caption '*Māṃsa*', Macdonell and Keith have written :—

"The eating of flesh appears as something quite regular in the Vedic texts, which show no trace of the doctrine of *ahiṃsā*, or abstaining from injury to animal. For example, the ritual offering of flesh contemplates that the gods will eat it, and again the Brāhmanas ate the offerings.

(Foot note : So Agni is called eater of ox and cow in ṚV. VIII.43.11)

A similar assertion has been made by V.S. Apte in Chapter 19, page 389 of 'The Vedic Age', which has been quoted above under the heading of 'Cow killing and Beef in the Marriage Ceremony'.

The Blided Taddhita or the Use of the Whole for the Part

The late Pandit Shripad Damodar Satavalekar has explained the system of the Elided Taddhita (*lupta-taddhita prakriyā*) on page 13 of the first part of the Vedic Section of his *Go-jñāna-kośa* :

"There are some Vedic mantras where the word-meaning seems to convey a strange sense, for example :

गोभिः श्रीणीत मत्सरम् । (Ṛgveda IX.46.4)

Its word-meaning is : Cook or mix (*śrīṇīta*) soma (*matsaram*) with cows (*gobhiḥ*). *Prima facie*, people are misled to interpret it as an injunction to cook or to mix *soma* with beef. This misapprehension arises due to the ignorance of grammar. If one is fully conversant with the *taddhita* affixes, then this error does not arise. Regarding it Ācārya Yāska has said in the Nirukta 2.5 :—

अथाप्यस्यां ताद्धितेन कृत्स्नवन्निगमा भवन्ति
'गोभिः श्रीणीत मत्सरमिति' पयसः ।

When there is at *taddhita* affix, the whole is used for a part. For example, in *gobhiḥ śrīṇīta matsaram*, the word *gau* means milk'. In this connection, it is well-worth to notice what Yāska has elaborated elsewhere too :—

'अंशुं दुहन्तो अध्यासते गवि' इत्यधिषवणचर्मणः ।
अथापि चर्म च श्लेष्मा च 'गोभिः सन्नद्धो असि वीळयस्व' इति रथस्तुतौ ।
अथापि स्नाव च श्लेष्मा च 'गोभिः सन्नद्धा पतति प्रसूता'
इतीषुस्तुतौ ॥ १ ॥ ५ ॥
ज्याऽपि गौरुच्यते । गव्या चेत्ताद्धितम्, अथ चेन्न गव्या गमयतीषून् इति ।
'वृक्षे वृक्षे नियतामीमयद्गौस्ततो वयः प्रपतान् पूरुषादः' ।

(Nirukta 2.5)

Here Acārya Yāska has cited three Vedic mantras and has given meanings of the word *go* as 'hide, gluten, ligament, and bow-string'—in all of them a part is denoted by the whole.

Arthur Anthony Macdonell and Arthur Berriedale Keith have also accepted it on page 234, Volume I of the 'Vedic Index' :—

"The term *go* is often applied to express the products of the cow. It frequently means the milk, but rarely the flesh of the animal. In many passages it designates leather used as the material of various objects, as a bowstring, or a sling, or thongs to fasten part of the chariot, or reins, or the lash of a whip."

Instead of saying 'the eyes see', it is said that 'man sees'. Similarly, for cow products like milk, yoghurt (*dahi*), ghee, hide, gluten, ligament and the string made of ligaments—for all of them—the Veda uses one word *gau*. In such cases, the meaning should be arrived at by the

context. For the convenience of our readers we will cite an instance of each :—

अंशुं दुहन्तो अध्यासते गवि । (Ṛg. X.94.9)

"Draining (*duhantaḥ*) the soma (*aṁśum*) they sit (*adhyāsate*) on the hide (*gavi*)."

Ralph T. H. Griffith has also translated it in the same way, taking *gavi* to mean 'hide', "draining the stalk they sit upon the Ox's hide."

See further :—

वनस्पते वीड्वङ्गो हि भूया अस्मत्सखा प्रतरणः सुवीरः ।
गोभिः सन्नद्धो असि वीलयस्वास्थाता ते जयतु जेत्वानि ॥

(Ṛg. VI.47.26)

"O chariot fashioned out of the tree (*vanaspate*)! be (*bhuyāḥ*) strong in your parts (*viḍvaṅgo*), be our mate to carry us across (*prataraṇaḥ*), being full of brave heroes (*suvīraḥ*). Compact with (*sannaddhaḥ*) straps of leather (*gobhiḥ*) show forth thy strength (*vilayasva*), and may thy rider (*te āsthātā*) with the vincible foe (*jetvāni jayatu*)."

In this mantra, the whole denotes the part in two cases :

(1) the word *go* denotes the straps of leather, and

(2) the word *vanaspati* refers to the chariot made of the wood of a tree. Just as the tree is lumbered into wood, and the wood is manufactured into a chariot, so the hide is derived from the cow and string from the hide. Similarly, the cow produces milk, milk curdles into yoghurt, the yoghurt yields butter, and butter is boiled to ghee—for this reason the word *go* is used metaphorically for all these products.

Now let us go on to another illustration :—

सुपर्णं वस्ते मृगो अस्या दन्तो गोभिः सन्नद्धा पतति प्रसूता ।

(Ṛg. VI.75.11)

"This arrow is dressed (*vaste*) in fine feathers (*suparṇam*), its tip (*dantaḥ*) is made out of deer bone (*mṛgaḥ*), it is strongly fastened with fine threads of cow-hide (*gobhiḥ sannaddhā*) and when launched (*prasūtā*) it strikes (*patati*) the enemy."

In this mantra also there are two instances where the whole denotes the part. The word *mṛga* 'deer' expresses the bone of a deer. Instead of saying 'the bone of a deer' only the elliptic expression 'deer' is used. Further on, the leather straps are expressed by *gobhiḥ*. This word has also been used elliptically for 'the straps of cow-hide'.

Also refer to the following mantra of Ṛgveda X.27.22 :—

वृक्षे वृक्षे नियतामीमयद्गौस्ततो वयः प्र पतान् पूरुषादः ॥

"The bowstring made of cowhide (*gauḥ*) strung (*niyatā*) on every bow made of wood (*vṛkṣe vṛkṣe*) resounds (*amimayat*) and the arrows with bird-feathers (*vayaḥ*) which consume men, i.e. strike them to death (*pūrūṣādaḥ*) fall (*prapatān*) in the ranks of enemies."

In this mantra, three words exemplify the semantics of 'a whole for a part' :—

(1) *vṛkṣa* 'tree' means a bow made from the wood of a tree.

(2) *gau* 'cow' denotes the bowstring made of cow-hide.

(3) *vayaḥ* 'birds' stands for arrows with bird-feathers.

From the afore-mentioned examples the readers must have understood that in the Vedic style the whole stands for its part. If this principle had been only applicable to the word *gau* 'cow', then one could have objected to it as an over-straining, but this is found

in the case of other words also. Over 2500 years ago, Āchārya Yāska has also said the same, and his examples are tabulated below :—

1. *vanaspati* 'tree' stands for a chariot made of the wood of a tree.
2. *vṛkṣa* 'tree' stands for a bow made of the wood of a tree.
3. *gau* 'cow' stands for its milk, ghee and others.
4. *gau* 'cow' stands for its hide, hide-products etc.
5. *gau* 'cow' stands for string, bag, etc. made from its hide.
6. *mṛga* 'deer' stands for weapon made from its bones.
7. *vayaḥ* 'birds' stands for the arrows made from the feathers of the birds.

Several instances can be cited ; but here we have confined ourselves only to those quoted by Ācārya Yāska. These will clarify to our readers that this is the Vedic style. As such the word *gau* (cow) used in Vedas or elsewhere as oblation material for *yajña* indicates milk, ghee etc. obtained from a cow.

The Meaning of Vaśānna

Now we have to consider the meaning of the words *ukṣānna* and *vaśānna* which are the epithets of Agni. Europeans surmise that *ukṣānna* means 'meat of the bull' and *vaśānna* is beef. The Europeans opine that because these words occur for Agni (fire) in the Vedas, meat was offered in the fire and it was also consumed. If human food is inferred from the synonyms of fire, then the fire is termed *viśvād* which means 'one who eats all' as in Ṛgveda VIII.44.26 :—

युवानं विश्पतिं कविं विश्वादं पुरुवेपसम् ।
अग्निं शुम्भामि मन्मभिः ॥

"I glorify with noble ideals Agni, the youthful, Lord of the Universe, sage who eats all *viśava-adam*, and who stirs much."

In this mantra, the word *viśvādaḥ* has been used for Agni. Agni eats (अद) all (विश्व), hence man ate everything ; it is improper to conclude from it that men of the Vedic age were omnivorous. Agni eats all, it consumes whatever is put into it, but how does it prove that man also necessarily consumed all these things.

Faggots of seven kinds of trees were offered into the fire, but how does this lead to the conclusion that Vedic Aryans ate the wood of the seven trees of mango, catechu, wood-apple, *Butea frondosa*, banyan, *Calotropis gigantea*. Such a procedure of deductions would be disastrous. Hence it would be improper to deduce from the words *ukṣānna* and *vaśānna*, which are found in the Ṛgveda, that Vedic Aryans ate meat of the bull and beef.

We have already explained before, the principle that the whole is used for its part. In accordance with it, the word *vaśānna* means 'the Agni which consumes milk, ghee and other produce from the cow.' Other similar examples are :

In Ṛgveda I.137.1 there are *gośritāḥ* and *gavāśiraḥ*. They are adjectives of *soma*. Their literal meaning is 'mixed (*śrita*) with cow (*go*)', and again mixed (*āśiraḥ*) with cow (*go*)'. In both of them the word *go* 'cow' occurs, and here no one interprets it as beef, but as 'milk of a cow'. Mr. Griffith has translated the word *gavāśiraḥ* as 'bent with milk'. It is known to all that a very pleasant drink was prepared by mixing cow's milk with *soma*.

Ācārya Sāyaṇa comments on the words *gośritāḥ* and *gavāśiraḥ* as follows :

विकारे प्रकृतिशब्द । पयोभिः मिश्रिताः ।
गोभिः क्षीरैः आशिरो मिश्रिताः संजाता ॥ (Rg. I.137.1-2)

To wit, here the word *go* 'cow' has been understood as 'milk' and *soma* is mixed therewith—so it is said here.

Things mixed with Soma and the meaning of Ukṣānna

The following products used to be mixed with *soma* according to information contained in the Vedic mantras :

1. *Gavāśiraḥ* गवाशिर: 'Soma mixed with cow's milk (ṚV. I.137.1)
2. *Gośrītā* गोश्रीता *Soma* mixed with cow's milk (ṚV. I.137.1)
3. *Dadhyāśiraḥ* दध्याशिर: *Soma* mixed with curd of cow-milk (ṚV. I.137.2)
4. *Yavāśiraḥ* यवाशिर 'Soma mixed with flour made from parched barley' (ṚV. I.187.9)
5. *Tryāśiraḥ* त्र्याशिर: '*Soma* mixed with milk, curds and parched grain'—Griffith (ṚV. V.27.5)
6. *Rasāśiraḥ* रसाशिर: '*Soma* mixed with juices' (ṚV. III.48.1)

From the above it is clear as to which products were mixed with *soma*. This should be particularly borne in mind by the readers that nowhere is there any reference to the mixing of flesh or blood with *soma*.

In the Veda, *soma* is also termed *ukṣā*. The root meaning of the word *ukṣā* is 'one who sprinkles'. Drops of juice drip from *soma*—hence it is called *ukṣā*. At first, *soma* juice is offered at the former altar (पूर्व वेदी). Hence, *soma* is the food of fire—this is the meaning of the word *ukṣānna*—'one whose food is *soma*'. The meaning 'bull' is not intended here, because meat of the bull is never offered at *havana*, then how can it go into the fire.

For a comprehensive discussion of the meaning of *ukṣā* as '*soma*', see the chapter on 'Is Beef eating Prescribed in the Bṛhadāranyaka-Upaniṣad ?'

This evidence proves that the terms *ukṣānna* and *vaśānna* for fire do not mean 'one who eats the flesh of a bullock or of a *vaśā* kow',

but it means that 'one who consumes products obtained from a bullock or a *vaśā* cow' as for instance :

ukṣā or *soma* —the fire that consumes *soma* juice ; or

ukṣā or bull —the fire that consumes grain produced through agriculture by bullock ; or

ukṣā or bull —the fire that consumes grain which imparts energy like that of a bull ; and

vaśā वशा —the fire that consumes milk-rice-pudding, ghee or other produce from the milk of a *vaśā* cow.

On page 929, column 2 of the Sanskrit-English Dictionary by Monier-Williams, *vaśa* (वश) is translated as "will, wish, desire RV. etc., etc.", *vaśān anu* or *anuvaśān* "according to wish or will".

The meaning of Ṛgveda VIII.43.11

Those who translate the terms *ukṣānna* and *vaśānna* as fire that eats bullock's flesh or beef, they cite Ṛgveda VIII.43.11 to prove their contention. The original mantra is as follows :—

उक्षान्नाय वशान्नाय सोमपृष्ठाय वेधसे स्तोमैर्विधेमाग्नये ।

It has been translated into Hindi by Pandit Jayadeva Sharma Vidyalankar, Mīmāṅsā-Tirtha and a commentator on all the four Vedas. Its English version is given below :—

(1) Let us adore and perceive (विधेम) with Vedic mantras (स्तोमैः) the soul (*ātmā* आत्मा) that is ethereal like the fire (अग्ने), that consume food capable of procreating (उक्षान्नाय), that enjoys food as it desires (वशान्नाय), and that is of the nature of vigour and verve (सोमपृष्ठाय).

(2) Let us revere, adore and worship (विधेम) with hymns (स्तोमैः) the Supreme Lord who is effulgent like fire (अग्नये), the Giver of waters (उक्षा), the Mover of all, of supreme sway (सोमपृष्ठाय), and the Creater of the Universe (वेधसे).

Barrenness of the Vaśā Cow

The late Pandit Shripad Damodar Satawalekar has discussed this topic on page 78-80 of his book *Go-jñāna-kośa* (Ancient Period Vedic Section, Vol. I). Its English version is given below :

In Classical Sanskrit, '*Vaśā*' means a barren cow. By interpreting these hymns as such under the impression that they pertain to barren cows, many people have gone to the extent that barren cows were slaughtered and different parts of her body were offered at the *yajña*. In our opinion it is excessive overdoing in interpretation. First of all we should examine whether in these hymns the word *vaśā* conveys the meaning of a barren cow or of a milch cow. Let us consider the following verses from the Atharva Veda :—

ATHARVAVEDA X.10

1. वशां सहस्रधारा····· आवदामसि ॥४॥

We praise the *vaśā* cow which gives us milk in a thousand streams. (4)

2. शतं कंसाः शतं दोग्धारः शतं गोप्तारो अधि पृष्ठे अस्याः ॥५॥

For the *vaśā* cow a hundred keepers and a hundred milkers stand ready with a hundred milk vessels. (5)

3. इराक्षीरा····· वशा ॥६॥

The giver of milk as food is the *vaśā* cow. (6)

4. ऊधस्ते भद्रे पर्जन्यः····· वशे ॥७॥

The udder of the *vaśā* cow symbolises the rain-cloud. (7)

Barrenness of Vaśā

5. धुक्षे·····क्षीरं वशे त्वम् ॥८॥

O *vaśā* cow ! you pour milk. (8)

6. ते·····पयः क्षीरं·····अहरद्वशे ॥१०॥

Milk of the *vaśā* cow has been extracted. (10)

7. ते·····क्षीरं अहरद्वशे····· त्रिषु पात्रेषु रक्षति ॥११॥

After milking the *vaśā* cow, its milk has been stored in three vessels. (11)

8. सर्वे गर्भाद्वेपन्त·····असूस्वः । ससूव हि तामाहुर्वशेति ॥२३॥

When the cow which generally does not conceive becomes pregnant, all get frightened. (23)

9. रेतो अभवद्वशायाः । ·····अमृतं तुरीयम् ॥२९॥

The semen of *vaśā* cow is her milk, ambrosia-like. (29)

10. वशाया दुग्धमपिबनसाध्या वसवश्च वे ॥३०॥

The Sādhyas and Vasus have drunk the milk of the *vaśā* cow in *yajña*. (30)

11. वशाया दुग्धं पीत्वा साध्या वसवश्च ये ।
ते वै ब्रध्नस्य विष्टपि पयो अस्या उपासते ॥३१॥

When the Sādhyas and Vasus have taken the milk of the *vaśā* cow, they praise her milk alone in Heaven. (31)

12. एनामेके दुहे घृतमेक उपासते ॥३२॥

Some milk this cow, while others look after its ghee. (32)

ATHARVAVEDA XII.4

13. उभयेन अस्मै दुहे ॥१८॥

This cow gives milk through both undder and teats. (18)

14. सुदुघा ...... वशा ...... दुहे ॥३५॥

The *vaśā* cow is easy to milk. (35)

15. प्रवीयमाना ...... वशा ॥३७॥

The *vaśā* cow gets conceived. (37)

16. गोपतये वशाददुषे विषं दुहे ॥३६॥

Vaśā yields milk as if it were poison to the owner of the cow who does not donate. (39)

17. वशायास्तत् प्रियं यद्देवत्रा हविः स्यात् ॥४०॥

The *vaśā* cow loves those who offer her milk products in *yajña*. (40)

According to Atharva-Veda X.10.23 (serial no. 8 above) it appears that the *vaśā* cow normally does not progenerate and in a while when she conceives, the rearers get scared. According to Atharva-Veda XII.4.37 (serial no. 15 above), at certain times, the *vaśā* cow conceives and progenerates. This verse of the Atharva-Veda reads in full as follows :—

प्रवीयमाना चरति क्रुद्धा गोपतये वशा ।
वेहतं मा मन्यमानो मृत्योः पाशेषु बध्यताम् ॥ (Atharva XII.4.37)

(वशा) The *vaśā* (प्रवीयमाना) cow which progenerates (क्रुद्धा चरति) roams about in anger (गोपतये) towards her master and curses him saying "(मन्यमान) he who considers (मा) me (वेहतं) abortive (बध्यतां) may he be liable to be seized (मृत्योः पाशेषु) in the clutches of death."

From this it appears that the Vedic *vaśā* cow is neither barren nor does she progenerate often like an ordinary cow. Whether she is barren or she progenerates, she gives milk in abundance and that is why a hundred persons attend to her, another hundred remain ready to milk her, and yet another hundred carry vessels for her milk.

Bārrenness of Vaśa

If it is accepted that the *vaśā* cow, without giving progeny, provides milk in such a large quantity, then it will also have to be accepted that only a very few fortunate persons are blessed with such a cow. Such cows surely cannot be had in numbers. In no circumstances, can a man think of destroying such a rare animal. Even in foreign countries where beef is eaten without any scruples and restrictions, even there if one were to get such a cow by good luck, one would protect and maintain her by all means and in no circumstances will allow her slaughter. As such, those who try to establish that the *vaśā* cow used to be slaughtered in the Vedic period are altogether in the wrong. Not to speak of the slaughter of the *vaśā* cow, even the killing of an ordinary cow in the Vedic period cannot be established according to the Vedas.

Keeping his self-interest and financial gain in view, even a butcher will not like to kill a cow having such qualities, but on the other hand he will protect her and will always benefit himself from her milk etc.

WAS THERE COW-SLAUGHTER AND BEEF IN THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY ?

In the first volume of the History of the Indian People, entitled 'The Vedic Age', published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London under the auspices of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, Dr. V. M. Apte has written in the 19th chapter on 'Social and Economic Conditions', (Second edition, 1952) under the caption : "Marriage and the Position of Women" (page 389).

> "A hymn in ṚV (X.85)—which may be called the wedding hymn—gives us some idea of the oldest marriage ritual. The bridegroom and party proceed to the bride's house (X. 17.1), where the well-adorned bride remains ready (IV. 58.9) to join the marriage-feast. The guests are entertained with the flesh of cows killed on the occasion (X. 85.13). The ceremony proper now commences. The bridegroom grasps the hand of the bride and leads her round the fire (X. 85.36, 38). These two acts constitute the essence of the marriage and the bridegroom is now the husband who takes her by hand (*hasta-grābhah* X. 18.8). The bridegroom next takes the bride home in a car, in a wedding procession (X. 85.7, 8, 10, 24-27, 42). Then follows the consummation which is signified chiefly by the purification of the bride's garment (X. 85. 28-30, 35)."

Thereafter Dr. Apte writes on page 393 under the caption : "*Food and Drink*" (page 393) :—

> "The cow receives the epithet *aghnyā* (not to be killed) in the Ṛgveda, and is otherwise a very valued possession. It is difficult to reconcile this with the eating of beef, but we may get some explanation if we remember the following :
>
> (i) Firstly, it was the flesh of the ox rather than of the cow that was eaten ; a distinction was definitely made.

> (ii) The flesh of the cow was (if at all) eaten at the sacrifices only, and it is well known that one sacrifices one's dearest possession to please the gods.
>
> (iii) Even in the Ṛgveda, only *vaśās* (barren cows) were sacrificed. For example, Agni is called in VIII.43.11 as *vaśānna*.
>
> The expression *atithinir gāḥ* (cows fit for guests) in X.68.3 implies the same distinction."

In the Vedic Index, Vol. 2, page 145, Arthur Anthony Macdonell and Arthur Berriedale Keith have stated :

> "The marriage ceremony was accompanied by the slaying of oxen, clearly for food."

Before taking into consideration the 13th mantra of the 85th sūkta of the tenth maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda, on the basis of which the aforementioned scholars have alleged beef in the marriage ceremony, it would be in the fitness of things that all the mantras of the 85th sūkta be considered for the appropriate setting of the whole situation.

Explanation of Ṛgveda IV.58.9

Dr. Apte alleges that according to Ṛgveda IV.58.9 as the bridegroom's party reaches the house of the bride, she is well-adorned and keeps ready to join the marriage-feast. The mantra reads :

कन्याइव वहतुमेतवा उ अञ्ज्यञ्जना अभि चाकशीमि ।
यत्र सोमः सूयते यत्र यज्ञो घृतस्य धारा अभि तत्पवन्ते ॥

The padapāṭha or break-up of the constituent words is as follows :

कन्याः, इव, वहतुम्, एतवा, उ, अञ्जि, अञ्जना, अभि, चाकशीमि,
यत्र, सोमः, सूयते, यत्र, यज्ञः, घृतस्य, धारा, अभि, तत्, पवन्ते ॥

We have looked up all these words in the Sanskrit English dictionaries

of Monier-Williams and V. S. Apte. None of these words means a 'feast'.

The word meaning of the mantra is as follows :—

कन्या इव — As the girls

अञ्जि अञ्जाना — having adorned themselves with ornaments

अभि पवन्ते — are resplendent

वहतुम् एतवा — while going for marriage

Likewise

	(Physical meaning)	(Spiritual significance)
यत्र सोमः सूयते	— where the *soma-yajña* is conducted.	where there are disciples of noble virtues.
यत्र यज्ञः	— where the *yajña* takes place	where there is the *yajña* of intellectual give-and-take
तद्	— there	there
घृतस्य धारा	— I see the shining	I envision or experience
अभि चाकशीमि	streams of *ghi*. Where there is *yajña*, the offering faggots are kindled being soaked in *ghi* and thereby the *yajña* becomes bright, brilliant and illuminated.	the uninterrupted flow of the expression of knowledge which is like the fast-flowing *ghee*i.e., illuminated knowledge is visualised.

This is an allegorical mantra, and there is not even a remote inkling of a beef feast.

H. H. Wilson has translated this mantra into English and there is not even a far-fetched allusion to a beef-feast. His translation is quoted below :—

Explanation of Ṛgveda IV.58.9

"I contemplate these streams of *ghi* as they flow from where the *soma* is effused, where the sacrifice (is solemnized), as maidens decorating themselves with unguents to go to the bridegroom". (ṚV. IV.5.13.9)

Ralph T. H. Griffith has referred to the bridal feast in the English translation of this mantra, but there is no reference to beef. His complete translation is as under :—

"As maidens deck themselves with gay adornment to join the bridal feast, I now behold them.

Where *Soma* flows and sacrifice is ready, thither the streams of holy oil are running."

In the English-Sanskrit dictionaries of Monier-Williams and V. S. Apte, the following Sanskrit equivalents are given for 'feast'.

सत्क्रिया, सहभोजनं, सम्भोजनं, उत्तमान्नसम्भारः, परमान्नसम्भारः, विशिष्टान्नसम्भारः।

How this meaning 'of joining the marriage *feast*' has been inserted by Dr. V. M. Apte in 'The Vedic Age' or other authors into this mantra, cannot be comprehended.

Dr. V. M. Apte writes that it was the flesh of the ox rather than of the cow that was eaten, because the cow has been termed *aghnyā* (अघ्न्या) 'one who is not to be killed', and she is also a valued possession. According to him, the bulls are not valued wealth, and thus they are not referred to as the inviolable in the Vedas. But this is a misunderstanding on his part. The late Pandit Shripad Damodar Satavalekar has discussed it at length in his *Go jñāna-kośa*, Vedic section, part 2, on pages 8-9 of the Introduction. It is cited below in our English translation :—

THE INVIOLABILITY OF THE BULL

As the word *aghnyā* (अघ्न्या) is used for the cow, likewise the term *aghnya* (अघ्न्य) is applied to the bull. Therefore, like the cow the bull too is to be protected, looked after and inviolable. See Atharva-Veda 9.4.—

शृङ्गाभ्यां रक्ष ऋषत्यवर्तिं हन्ति चक्षुषा ।
शृणोति भद्रं कर्णाभ्यां गवां यः पतिरघ्न्यः ॥१७॥
शतयाजं स यजते नैनं दुन्वन्त्यग्नयः ।
जिन्वन्ति विश्वे तं देवा यो ब्राह्मण ऋषभमाजुहोति ॥१८॥

"That lord of the cows, the inviolable (*aghnya*—अघ्न्य), that is the bull, he listens to good tidings with his ears, he banishes famine by his eyes, he chases away the demons with his horns. He worships with a hundred *yajñas*, the fires do not consume (*agnayah na duvanti*) him (*enam*, the bull). All the gods promote him who offers (*ā juhoti*) the bull (*ṛṣabha*) to the Brahmana."

In the above mantra, the following points deserve attention :

1. The bull is termed *a-ghnya* (अघ्न्य) which means 'not to be killed'.
2. The donation of a bull to a Brahmana is equivalent to a hundred *yajñas* (mantra 18). Such is the importance of the protection, bringing up and donation of a bull.
3. The fires do not consume him, such is the importance of a bull (mantra 18).
4. The bull does not hear untoward speech, because all only praise him (mantra 17).
5. The bull does away the horrors of famine (*avarti hanti cakṣuṣā*). The bull eliminates famine by agriculture (mantra 17).

By perusing the above Atharva-vedic description of the bull, the readers will realise the utility of the bull, so who will dare to slaughter

him for filling up his stomach and who would be willing to invite famine thereby. If the bull averts famine, it is necessary to keep him well-guarded.

Dr. V. S. Apte has written : "The flesh of the cow was (if at all) eaten at the sacrifices only, and it is well known that one sacrifices one's dearest possession to please the gods." It should be known that to sentient being the dearest is one's own body ; so if offering of life has to be made to please the gods, the dearest possession that is one's own body should be offered. It is his misunderstanding that the gods are pleased by the offering of a cow. See its detailed discussion under the caption : 'Were Cow-Slaughter, Meat Sacrifice and Meat-Eating Prevalent in the Vedic Age ?'

Hereafter Apte writes that according to the Ṛgveda a barren (*vaśā*) cow was offered, because in Ṛgveda VIII.43.11 Agni is called *vaśānna*. By this he means that the food of agni is *vaśā*, therefore, a barren (*vaśā*) cow was slaughtered and its flesh offered in *havan*. To consider the Vedic *vaśā* cow to be barren is due to ignorance. For its correct interpretation see the caption : 'The meaning of *Ukṣānna* and *Vaśānna* and Barrenness of the *vaśā* cow'.

Still further, Dr. Apte asserts that the expression *athithinir gāḥ* (Ṛgveda 10.68.3) also implies the same. See its detailed discussion under the sub-caption : 'The Meaning of Atithinirgāḥ and Atithigva of the caption : 'Is Beef Possible in Madhuparka ?'

The meaning of Ṛgveda X.85

Now we will consider the relevance of cow-slaughter and beef in the marriage ceremony. It has been discussed by the late Pandit Shripad Damodar Satavalekar in his *Go-jñāna-kośa*, Vedic Section, Part I, pages 16-20. It is quoted below in our English translation. The following mantra is cited in support :

सूर्याया वहतुः प्रागात् सविता यमवासृजत् ।
अघासु हन्यन्ते गावोऽर्जुन्योः पर्युह्यते ॥ (Ṛgveda X.85.13)

This mantra occurs in an allegorical context. The meaning will become clear by taking its contextual setting into account. Now let us see some mantras preceding it as well as a few that follow :

सत्येनोत्तभिता भूमिः सूर्येणोत्तभिता द्यौः ।
ऋतेनादित्यास्तिष्ठन्ति दिवि सोमो अधि श्रितः ॥१॥

चित्तिरा उपबर्हणं चक्षुरा अभ्यञ्जनम् ।
द्यौर्भूमिः कोश आसीद्यदयात्सूर्या पतिम् ॥७॥

स्तोमा आसन्प्रतिधयः कुरीरं छन्द ओपशः ।
सूर्याया अश्विना वराग्निरासीत्पुरोगवः ॥८॥

सोमो वधूयुरभवदश्विनास्तामुभा वरा ।
सूर्यां यत्पत्ये शंसन्तीं मनसा सविताददात् ॥९॥

मनो अस्या अन आसीद् द्यौरासीदुत च्छदिः ।
शुक्रावनड्वाहावास्तां यदयात्सूर्या गृहम् ॥१०॥

ऋक्सामाभ्यामभिहितौ गावौ ते सामनावितः ।
श्रोत्रं ते चक्रे आस्तां दिवि पन्थाश्चराचरः ॥११॥

शुची ते चक्रे यात्या व्यानो अक्ष आहतः ।
अनो मनस्मयं सूर्यारोहत्प्रयती पतिम् ॥१२॥

सूर्याया वहतुः प्रागात्सविता यमवासृजत् ।
अघासु हन्यन्ते गावोऽर्जुन्योः पर्युह्यते ॥१३॥

यदयातं शुभस्पती वरेयं सूर्यामुप ।
क्वैकं चक्रं वामासीत्क्व देष्ट्राय तस्थथुः ॥१४॥

द्वे ते चक्रे सूर्ये ब्रह्माण ऋतुथा विदुः ।
अथैकं चक्रं यद्गुहा तदद्धातय इद्विदुः ॥१६॥
(Ṛgveda X.85.1, 7-13, 15, 16)

While considering these mantras the readers should bear in mind that it is an allegorical description of the marriage of *Suryā* (सूर्या), the Daughter of the Sun, to the Moon. Its meaning is :

Earth is sustained by Truth : by *Surya* (सूर्य) are the heavens sustained. By verity the *Ādityas* stand secure, and *Soma* stands in heaven—द्युलोक (1) ; Intellectual power was the pillow of her couch, sight was the unguent for her eyes : All the objects from the earth to the heavens were her treasure when bride *Suryā* (सूर्या) went unto her Lord. (7) ; Mantras were the cross-bars of the chariot, Kurira-metre decked it ; The bridesmen were the Twin *Aśvins*, *Agni* led them all. (8) ; *Soma* was he who wooed the bride, groomsmen were both the *Aśvins*, when the Sun-god *Savitā*, bestowed his willing *Suryā* (सूर्या) on her Lords. (9) ; Her Mind was the bridal car ; the covering thereof was heaven ; the two white steers drew it, when *Suryā* (सूर्या) approached her husband's home. (10) ; The two bulls were kept steady in place by the mantras of the Rig and Sāma Vedas. The two ears were the two chariot wheels : stationary and moving were the path in the heavens. (11) ; Clean as thou wentest, were thy wheels ; the *vyāna* breath was the axle of the chariot. Seated on such a chariot fashioned of the Mind, *Suryā* (सूर्या) proceeds to her Lord. (12) ; *Savita* gave a bountiful dowry to *Suryā* (सूर्या). She moved forward. This is the time of the *Maghā* constellation when the cows are sent as dowry (Europeans have interpreted it as cows are slain during the *Maghā* constellation), that is, the rays of the sun reach the moon and in the *Phālguni* constellation (*arjunnyoḥ paryuhyate*) the moon *Soma* is wedded to *Suryā*, (13) ; O ye twin *Aśvi-devas*, when you came to *Suryā's* wedding on a three-wheeled chariot, where was the one chariot wheel of yours ? Where stood ye for the command ?

(15) : *O Surya* (सूर्य) the *Brahmans* recognize the two seasons (*Uttarāyaṇa* and *Dakṣiṇāyana*) as two wheels of thine and the one kept concealed (or invisible in the cave of the heart) is known to those who are skilled in the eternal truths. (16)

The readers can follow the mantras and comprehend their meaning. It will be clear that there is no relevance of the slaughter of cows. If we try to insert that the cows were killed, that does not suit the context. We have given above the translation of the Europeans (in brackets) and also the real and correct meaning. The readers should deliberate and should themselves come to realise how wrongly the Europeans have misunderstood these mantras.

Dr. Wilson has translated the expression *aghāsu hanyante gāvaḥ* as 'the cows are whipped along', which is a bit better than Griffith, Whitney and others who have understood it as 'the cows are slaughtered' which is a grave blunder as is clear from the whole context. The meanings of the mantras as we have given above are also accepted by the Europeans ; they differ only in the slaughter of cows. In fact, now it is not necessary to go into further details. Yet, we will elaborate the allegory of the bridal chariot to make it clearly intelligible to the readers.

Bridal chariot	Spirit, mind	(Mantra 10)
Covering of the chariot	Heaven	(,, ,,)
Those who draw the chariot	Two bulls	(,, ,,)
Reins	Mantras of Ṛk & Sāma	(Mantra 11)
Path or way	The stationary and moving worlds, i.e. the inanimate and animate worlds	(,, ,,)
Axis of the chariot	vyāna breath	(Mantra 12)
Pillow	Intellectual power	(Mantra 7)

Unguent for the eyes	sight	(Mantra 7)
Treasure	all the objects	(,, ,,)
Crossbars of the chariot	Mantras	(Mantra 8)
Shine of the chariot	Metres of the mantras	(,, ,,)
Groomsmen of the bride	The twin Aśvins	(Mantra 9)
Herald	Agni	(,, ,,)
The two wheels of the chariot	The two ears	(Mantra 11)

This description follows the mantras literally. The readers are aware that Vedic depiction proceeds on the three planes of the physical, deific, and metaphysical. This three-fold interpretation will become clear from the tabulation given hereunder :

PHYSICAL (in worldly usage)	DEIFIC (in the universe)	METAPHYSICAL (in the body)
Father of the bride	Sun	The Supreme father
Bride	Suryā (Light of the Sun)	Intellective power
Bridegroom	Soma	Spirit (ātmā) endowed with the 16 degrees
Groomsmen of the bride	Twin Aśvins	Inhalation and Exhalation
In the bridal party	Agni in the fore	Speech
Unguent in the eyes	Scenes	Sight
Bridal treasure	All the objects	All the parts of the body
...	...	
Cows	Rays	Senses

Chariot	Lightning	Mind
Covering of the chariot	Heaven—द्युलोक	Brain
Path of the chariot	Stationary and moving	Inanimate and animate
Those who draw the chariot	Two bulls	Prāna & apāna breaths
Reins	...	Mantras of the Ṛk & Sāma
Cross bars of the chariot	...	Mantras
Shine of the chariot	...	Metres
Axle	...	Vyāna breath
Two wheels of the chariot	Directions	Two ears
Pillows in the chariot	...	Noble thoughts.

On perusing this tabulation, the Vedic allegory must have become evident to the readers. So it is not necessary to elaborate it further. The readers can see this wedding within themselves and also in the world without. These Vedic mantras depict the eternal wedding taking place in the external world ; and now-and-then the nuptials occurring in the human body have also been indicated by allegory to the mind, noble thoughts, etc. The light of the sun drives pleasure by reflecting into the moon ; this provides the metaphor for a description of the metaphysical reality.

Use of the root 'Han' with the word '*Go*'

The word *go* (गौ) refers to the rays of the sun ; this is beyond doubt. In *hanyante* the root is *han*. The great grammarian Pāṇini, the Sage, has given two meanings : *han hiṁsa-gatyoḥ*, i.e., in the Dhātupāṭha it means 'killing' and 'moving'. In the dictionaries, this root *han* has the following meanings :

Use of the root 'Han' with the word '*Go*'

To kill ; To multiply ; To go.

The readers will find these meanings in every dictionary. If the readers will take these meanings into account, then the meaning of the expression

अघासु हन्यन्ते गावोऽर्जुन्योः पर्युह्यते

in the mantra (even leaving out the allegory) will be clear.

(अघासु) at the time of the Maghā constellation
(गावः) the cows (हन्यन्ते) are driven along, and
(अर्जुन्योः) during the Phālguni constellation
(पर्युह्यते) the marriage takes place.

Dr. Wilson has taken only this meaning. Besides the allegorical interpretation, as a matter of fact on a cursory glance too, this is the straight-forward meaning. Though the well-known meaning of the root *han* is 'to kill', yet the other significance of 'to move' has not become obsolete. If we take it to mean 'to multiply', then the expression *gāvaḥ hanyante* will mean 'the number of cows is multiplied', the cows are multiplied two-fold or four-fold. When a marriage takes place, several people collect together and to offer them milk, cows are collected and brought from place to place and thus their numbers are augmented. See how perfectly and naturally this interpretation suits the context. A meaning which will conform to the concept of inviolability of the cow inherent in the word *aghnyā* and which will suit the context, that meaning alone will be correct and appropriate.

Besides, it will be clear from the tabulation that the cows of the physical plane, are the rays in the deific, and the sensory powers on the metaphysical plane. In case of doubt, the meaning should be determined by recourse to other areas of semantic usage. On there being a doubt as to the meaning on the physical plane, i.e. in worldly practice, whether the cows should be slaughtered or not during

marriage, how the mantra should be translated ; which of the two meanings of the root *han* should be taken—we should consider and arrive at an appropriate decision after taking into account the meanings on the deific and metaphysical planes. On the deific plane, it is clear that rays of the sun are reflected on to the moon and light spreads. The rays of the sun are not killed or extinguished. Considering this we find that the root *han* in the sense of 'to kill' is not intended, but the significance of 'expansion, spreading or movement' alone is meant. If the meaning of extinction or killing is taken up, then how could the rays of the sun reach the moon after being extinct. How will light the daughter of the sun (*Suryā Sāvitrī*) be wedded to the Moon (*Soma*) ? How will the bridal party proceed in pomp and show ? In short, here the root *han* does not signify 'to kill'.

On the metaphysical plane we should look within. Will there be happiness of the Spirit (ātmā) by annihilating the sensory powers, or will their discipline alone auger well ? The bridal chariot should proceed on the path of *dharma*, disciplined by the mantras of Ṛk and Sāma, on the way of the world. For this, the bulls who draw this chariot should be well-trained, and governed by the mantras they should move on the correct path. From this train of ideas, it is again evident that cow-keeping is intended.

Likewise, it is but proper that cows should be collected, moved along the proper way and not allowed to go astray so that family relations coming to the wedding ceremony are well-fed with milk. What will be gained by killing them, by slaughtering them ?

From this point of view also it appears that the multiplication of cows is intended, or to move them along the proper path is meant. As pointed out above, the root *han* means *gati* or movement. This *gati* signifies knowledge, going and obtaining. These meanings are attested by the grammarians. If we take this meaning of *gati*, then the expression *gāvaḥ hanyante* would mean to gain knowledge about the cows, to move the cows or to obtain the cows.

The root *han* also means 'to prod'. Now-a-days this meaning is

current in the Marathi language. The word *hanana*—Marathi *hāṇaṇe* (हाणणे)—means to prod with a stick, i.e. a cowherd leads the cows by a stick in whichever direction he wants to take them. So this is also the signification of the word *hanana*. If we take this meaning of the root *han*, then *hanyante gāvaḥ* would mean that the cowherds prod the cows to the desired direction. In the context of the marriage, they bring them together and take them to the desired destination.

Whichever alternative we accept, this much is clear that the killing of cows is not intended. Ācārya Sāyana also does not translate it as killing मघा नक्षत्रेषु गावः हन्यन्ते दण्डैः ताड्यन्ते प्रेरणार्थम्, i.e. at the time of the *maghā* constellation the cows are driven to their destination being prodded on with sticks. The cows starting from the house of the Sun are guided on the correct way to the house of the Moon. The purport of the commentary of Sāyana is that the sun god gave cows as dowry to his daughter at her marriage. To bring the cows to the house of the moon the cowherd of the sun drive them along, and is necessary to keep them on the correct path they prod them with sticks and finally the cows reach the house of *soma*, and at the time of the *phalgunī* constellation the daughter of the sun is wedded to the moon. If we accept the meaning of 'killing of cows', then the dowry would be annihilated and the would be son-in-law would be angered, and the marriage would be interrupted. So the meaning of 'killing' does not apply here.

In whatever manner we consider the passage, it will be evident that cow-slaughter is not meant here. Inspite of all this European scholars have written on the basis of this mantra that 'the marriage ceremony was accompanied by slaying of oxen, clearly for food'. It is really astonishing how they jot down their imagination without considering the context. The Europeans may indulge in fancy, but we should arrive at a rendering after due consideration of the context. As we have seen in the above mantra in no way does cow-slaughter fit in the context, yet Europeans are bent upon presenting this mantra as an evidence of beef-eating. Can there be a bigger blunder ?

The *maghā* constellation is immediately followed by the prior (*pūrvā*) and later (*uttara*) *phalguni* constellations. The moon stays in them for three nights. If Monday falls on the *maghā* constellation, then the Tuesday and Wednesday fall on the two *phālguni* constellations. Hence the dowry is sent during the *magha* constellation, and the wedding takes place on the second or third day. If any facts have to be deduced from this mantra, then we will arrive at the situation that according to the Veda, cows were given as dowry, and the marriage took place after the dowry reached the bridegroom's home. But, there is no possibility of deducing the slaughter of cows. Such a conclusion is a display of strange ignorance. We certainly have to decide which of the several meanings of the root *han* is intended here :

1. *han*—to kill. This meaning is well known.
2. *han*—to go ; to move ; to goad. This meaning is given by grammarians and it is also exemplified by passages. In the Vedic usage this meaning is commoner than in the classical language. It is also *gati* given in the Vedic lexical work Nighaṇṭu 2.74.
3. *han*—to guard ; as in *hasta-ghna*. Here *ghna* from the root *han* means to protect. *Hasta-ghna* means 'hand-guard', which is cognate to *dastânā*. This is a Vedic usage (Ṛgveda VI.75.14).
4. *han*—to multiply. It is used in mathematical literature, *ghāta* (घात) *hanana* (हनन) *hati* (हति) *hata* (हत) convey the meaning of 'multiplication' etc.
5. *han*—to raise ; to kick up. Its instance is : *turaga-khura-hatas tathā hi reṇuḥ*—'the dust kicked up by the hoofs of horses' in Śākuntala 1.32.
6. *han*—to beat ; to prod ; as the cowherds prod the kine by a stick.
7. *han*—to ward off ; to avert. This meaning is attested by the Mahābhārata also.
8. *han*—to touch ; to come in contact. It is an astronomical term in Varāhamihira's Bṛhat-saṁhitā.

9. *han*—to give up ; to abandon.
10. *han*—to obstruct.

Ten meanings of the root *han* are given in dictionaries. Which of them are applicable to the ancient Vedic mantras, can be decided only after considering their relevancy to the context. If the root *han* is interpreted as 'to kill' wherever it occurs, that would become nonsensical.

Conclusion

Those scholars who have tried to show on the basis of Ṛg-Veda that the cow-slaughter was resorted to for feasting the bride-groom party, have picked up stray mantras from here and there without any coherence. They have tried to mislead the people by their academic standing or by the importance of their status. The bride is set to be elegantly adorned and dressed to be taken to participate in the bridal feast in the fourth Mandala of the Ṛig-Veda, and in the remote tenth Mandala it is alleged that the marriage party is feasted on beef. While unconnected and far removed, both of them are allegorical descriptions as has been shown earlier. Those scholars whose intellect runs over to cover such unrelated statements, far removed from each other, it is beyond comprehension that their intelligence is unable to see the reality of facts. Undoubtedly, they have moulded their researches being motivated by special considerations. This is amply attested and it must have become evident to our readers by the clarifications offered in this essay.

WAS THE COW KILLED AT CREMATION ?

Raja Rajendralala Mitra writes on page 2 lines 4-6 of his booklet 'Beef in Ancient India' :—

> "A supply of beef was deemed an absolute necessity by pious Hindus in their journey from this world to another world, and a cow was invariably killed to be burnt with the dead."

He has further referred the readers to his article 'Funeral Ceremonies of Ancient Hindus'. On ransacking, we found it in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal Vol. XXXIX, Part I, No. IV of 1870. It was delivered as a speech in November 1870. In lines 3-10 of page 251 it is stated :—

> "The Āraṇyaka, after arranging the sacrificial vessels, gives the mantra for covering the corpse with the raw hide of the cow, which should be entire with head, hair and feet, the hairy side being kept upper-most. The mantra for the purpose is addressed to the hide ; 'Cuirass, carefully protect this body from the light of Agni ; envelope it with thy thick fat and marrow ; holding this impudent Agni, desirous of seeing and consuming it by his vigour, allow him not to go astray'."

The mantra of the Āraṇyaka referred to above is the 7th mantra of the 16th sūkta of the 10th maṇḍala of the Ṛgveda.

In lines 7-9 of page 147 of the 'Vedic Index', Vol. II, it is asserted :—

> "The ritual of cremation of the dead required the slaughter of a cow as an essential part ; the flesh being used to envelope the dead body."

The late Pt. Shripād Dāmodar Sātavalekar has discussed this passage at length on pages 4-5 of the Introduction to his 'Go-jñāna-kośa', ancient sector, Vedic section, part II, under the heading 'Antya Yajña'. It is quoted below in extenso in our English translation :—

"According to Vedic tradition the whole life of man is a great *yajña*. To devote one's entire life to the good of all is a *yajña*, and death of the human person is the final offering. When the final offering, i.e. the offering of one's body, is effected, that is the completion of the life-long *yajña*. The readers should note the loftiness of the conception of a life pervaded by *yajña*. In the Vedic tradition, cremation is not mere reduction of the body to ashes, but it is the final *yajña*, and being the last offering it is the consummating *yajña*. The body is offered into the flaming fires ; from this point of view the offering of flesh i.e. one's entire body—into fire is in accord with Vedic *dharma*. But can this be termed a *yajña* with meat ? Now-a-days a meat sacrifice means the offering of the flesh of a horse, a cow, or a bull. This is quite different from the final offering or cremation. In this ultimate act, the offering of the human body or of another body, is not meant to be eaten. As the dead body has not to be kept in the house, it is burnt and this is termed the last *yajña*. So if one says that meat is used in *yajña* it is true in a way, but what is intended and understood by it—that is not the truth. So we say that inspite of fire being named *kravyāda* 'consuming flesh or corpses' it does not prove the eating of animal flesh. Fire was so termed because of the cremation of dead bodies in the Vedic age. As a matter of course, men die, their corpses are cremated. In war, horses, bulls and other animals die in battle along with men—all of them were cremated in Vedic times. The readers can judge from this custom that though fire is called *kravyāda*, it in no way proves the eating of meat :

अग्नेर्वर्म परि गोभिर्व्ययस्व सं प्रोर्णुष्व पीवसा मेदसा च ।
नेत्त्वा धृष्णुर्हरसा जर्हृषाणो दधृग्विधक्ष्यन्पर्यङ्खयाते ॥
(Ṛg. X.16.7)

Here the word *gobhiḥ* is used. Europeans have surmised from it that the corpse was covered with beef, and for it, they deem cow-slaughter to be essential. Several Indian scholars who think likewise

Here it has to be taken into consideration that the word *gobhiḥ* is in the plural, and according to Sanskrit grammar, plural means 'at least three cows'. If a human corpse has to be covered with flesh, will it require three cows as minimum ? If this rite has to be accomplished with beef, will one cow not suffice ? The body of a cow is three-to-four times the human body, so the covering of the corpse of one human being will not require at least three or more cows.

This will draw the attention of our readers to the fact that something else is intended. By the word *gau* (गौ) are intended milk, yoghurt (दही), ghee, hide, etc. This is accepted even by Europeans. So we must find out for which product three or more cows can be required during cremation, and what is it that cannot be effected by one cow alone.

Flesh, hide, lard, etc. can be obtained in sufficient quantity from one cow. So ghee alone is the product which will have to be obtained from more than three cows. It is essential to smear the corpse with ghee before putting it on the fire. Those who perform *havan* they know well that ghee is poured over oblation-materials before they are offered into the fire. So also the kindling faggots are soaked in ghee before being put into the fire. In the final *havan* when the body, the consummating faggot is offered into the fire, will ghee not be required ? Now-a-days ghee required for properly soaking the faggots is not available, so they are just sprinkled over with a few drops. In the Vedic age when there was no dearth of ghee, it is no wonder that the dead body was well anointed with ghee, the body that was the faggot offering par excellence into the ultimate *yajña*. The ghee also allays poison. When the corpse burns, poisonous air fills the atmosphere ; to cleanse it the more the ghee the better, and more and more necessary it is. The atmosphere is purified by it. According to Vedic custom, the quantity of ghee used for cremation was equal to the weight of the body. Now-a-days the Hindus make 5 to 10 tolas suffice for this rite.

To comprehend '*gau*' as meaning ghee produced from a cow, is not new. It is accepted by all. Inspite of this, it is amazing

how one can surmise the slaughter of a cow by the mantra under discussion.

The attention of scholars has not been drawn to the plural form of *gau*, or they have intentionally overlooked it, hence this non-sensical rendering—this is clear and evident.

The detailed consideration of this mantra also proves that in the Vedic age there was no idea of slaughtering either a milch-cow or a *vaśā* cow.



WAS A RED BULLOCK SLAIN FOR ITS HIDE AT THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASIONS OF MARRIAGE AND ROYAL CONSECRATION ?

In 'Cow-Slaughter—Horns of a Dilemma', edited by Śri A. B. Shah, Śri Mukandi Lal has written under the caption : 'Cow Cult in India' on page 18 :

> "Slaughter of cows on ceremonial occasions was considered auspicious in ancient India. The bride and bridegroom were to sit on the raw skin of a red bull before the altar. The skin must have been of the red bull sacrificed on the occasion of the marriage ceremony to feed the guests."

He continues further :

> "Similarly, on the occasion of the coronation of kings, the raw skin of a red bull was placed under the seat of the king to be anointed. Probably the king had to sit on fresh cow hide to perform the ceremony."

We have already introduced Messrs. A. B. Shah and Mukandi Lal and have given an assessment of the depth of their knowledge under the heading "Were Cows slaughtered at King Rantideva's Place ?" It is not necessary to repeat it here.

Śri Mukandi Lal has not referred to the Dharma-śāstra wherever the above facts are cited. It appears that he has no personal knowledge of their source and neither did he find it necessary to go into their details. His sole objective seems to be to do propaganda for cow-slaughter somehow or the other, making use of the stature of his position. Whatever it be, it is necessary to clarify the points raised by him in trying to mislead the common man, so that false apprehensions are removed.

Was a Red Bull-Hide Obtained by Slaughter at a Marriage Ceremony ?

For cow-slaughter in a marriage ceremony and for serving beef to guests during a marriage feast, see the heading 'Was There Cow-Slaughter and Beef in the Marriage Ceremony ?'

The contention of Śri Mukandi Lal is that beef was served to guests at marriage, and for it a red bull was slaughtered then and there and the raw hide of the red bull was used as a seat for the bride and groom. Such a raw hide was also used at the coronation ceremony as a seat for the King to be coronated. Let the readers consider how practicable it is that a red bull was slain just after the arrival of the groom's party ; its raw hide was utilized for seating the bride and groom and a similar fresh raw hide was employed as the seat for a King to be coronated and to serve the meat of that red bull to guests in the groom's party ? The fresh raw hide of a red bullock slain instantaneously will be dripping with blood and its flesh will be oozing, which is a horrid sight. It will be smelling horrible. Is it possible that such an item fits in the festive decorations of a marriage or of a royal consecration ? Inspite of this, men like Mukandi Lal try to mislead people by such impossible fantasies without a proper analysis of the whole situation, taking undue advantage of the stature of their position.

In recent times, Pandurang Vaman Kane has made a detailed study of the Dharmaśāstras. Its results have been incorporated in his book 'History of Dharmaśāstra'. From the description given in its Vol. 2, part 1, page 530, under the caption 'Ceremonies of Marriage', it is clear that according to the Sūtras, only the bride is seated on a bullock-hide and that too when she comes to the bridegroom's house after the performance of the due departure ceremony. On that occasion the groom makes a few offerings in the marital fire. All the gṛhya-sūtras we have been able to gather, prove this very situation. Thus it clearly proves as false and unfounded the contention of Mukandi Lal that a bullock was slain then and there by the bride's party to

serve beef to the groom's entourage and that its freshly obtained hide was used to seat the groom and bride for the marriage ceremony.

All the gṛhya-sūtra texts are not available now-a-days. After strenuous efforts, we have been able to consult Āśvalāyana, Kāṭhaka, Vārāha, Baudhāyana, Pāraskara, Gobhila, Bhāradvāja and Khādira gṛhya-sūtras.

All of them refer to the red (रोहित, लोहित) hide of the bullock. But the Baudhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra does not specify the red colour. Nowhere have we come across a seat of bullock-hide instead of the usual seat. Wherever a seat of hide is referred to, there only the deer-hide is prevalent. Even if, for argument's sake we accept a bullock-hide seat for any ritual of the marriage ceremony, it does not prove that to obtain bullock-hide for a seat, it was incumbent to slay a bovine animal. The hides of animals who die a natural death are available, which can be utilised for all appropriate purposes. Cows and bullocks of a red colour also die. If, in case ox-hide or red ox-hide is required for a ritual during marriage, then an ox-hide obtained without killing can also be used as a seat on such occasions. Even by straining or twisting the interpretation of words in the original text we do not arrive at the meaning that it was essential to obtain hide for a seat by slaying a cow or a bull on that very occasion, nor can we come to the meaning that the groom's party was to be served with beef.

Here below are the texts of the gṛhya-sūtras on which we have been able to lay our hands. Readers conversant with Sanskrit can conclude for themselves :

1. Āśvalāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.8.9 :—

विवाहाग्निमुपसमाधाय पश्चादस्याऽऽनडुहं चर्माऽऽस्तीर्यं प्राग्ग्रीवमुत्तरलोम तस्मिन्नुपविष्टायां समन्वारब्धायाम् । आ नः प्रजां जनयतु प्रजापतिरिति चतसृभिः प्रत्यृचं हुत्वा समञ्जन्तु विश्वेदेवा इति दध्नः प्राश्य प्रतिप्रयच्छेदाज्यशेषेण वाऽनक्ति हृदये ॥

2. Sāṅkhāyana-gṛhya-saṅgraha :—

अनडुहद्धोमकर्म वक्ष्यामः । अत्र स्तरणाद्याघाराज्यभागाः पाक्षिकाः । उपलेपनोल्लेखनाद्याघाराज्यभागं कृत्वा ततो लोहिते बलीवर्दचर्मणि वधूमुपवेशयन्ति । ततो वधूः कुशैरन्वारभते पतिर्जुहोति ।

3. Kāṭhaka (Laugākṣi) gṛhya-sūtra 3.4.4 (28.4) :—

रोहिण्या मूलेन वा यद्वा पुण्योक्तमपरेणाग्निमानडुहे रोहिते चर्मण्युपविश्यापि वा दर्भेष्वेव जयप्रभृतिभिर्हुत्वाग्निरेतु प्रथम इति च ।

4. Vārāha-gṛhya-sūtra : (Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. XVIII, Edited by R. Sama Sastry B.A., 1921 edition योक्त्रबन्धनम् प्रकरण, page 18) :

पश्चादग्ने रोहिते चर्मण्यानडुहे प्राग्ग्रीवे लोमतो दर्भानास्तीर्य तेषु वधूमुपवेशयति ।

5. Baudhāyana-gṛhya-sūtra 1.5.8 :—

अथैनामानडुहे चर्मण्युपवेशयति "इह गावः प्रजायध्वमिहाश्वा इह पूरुषाः । इहो सहस्रदक्षिणो रायस्पोषो निषीदतु" इति ।

6. Pāraskara-gṛhya-sūtra 1.8.10 :—

तां दृढपुरुष उन्मथ्य प्राग्वोदग्वाऽनुगुप्त आगारे आनडुहे रोहिते चर्मण्युपवेशयति इह गावो निषीदन्त्विहाश्वा इह पूरुषाः । इहो सहस्र दक्षिणो यज्ञ इह पूषा निषीदन्त्विति ।

7. Gobhila-gṛhya-sūtra 2.2.3 :—

अपरेणाऽग्निमानडुहं रोहितचर्म प्राग्ग्रीवमुत्तरलोमास्तीर्णं भवति ।

8. Bhāradvāja-gṛhya-sūtra 1.18 :—

पुनस्त्वान्यक्षिया देवा नयन्तु यत आगता इत्यथैनां गृहानुपानडुहे रोहिते चर्मण्युपवेशयतीह गावो निषीदन्त्विहाश्वा इह पूरुषाः ।

9. Khādira-gṛhya-sūtra 1.4.2 :—

ब्राह्मणकुलेऽग्निमुपसमाधाय पश्चादग्नेर्लोहित चर्मानडुहमुत्तरलोम प्राग्ग्रीवमास्तीर्य वाग्यतामुपवेशयेत् ।

10. We could not get the original Sanskrit text of the Mānavagṛhya-sūtra but only its English translation by M. J. Dresden. Herein too the sequence is that the bride is seated after coming to the house of her in-laws, and there is no inkling of any slaying here. It also enjoins the spreading of *kuśa* grass on the hide, and alternatively it prescribes that the bride should take a *kuśa* seat. Below we quote the English translation :

"To the west of the fire, he causes the bride to sit down upon a red bull-skin, of which the neck is turned eastward, on the hairy side, after having bestrewn it (i.e. the skin) with Darbha-grass, or (he causes her to) sit down on Darbha-grass (only)."

Even a person like Max Muller, whose intention was to eliminate the feeling of reverence for the cow from the minds of the Hindus, has not been able to twist the meaning of any gṛhya-sūtra in his English translation, to signify that at the occasion of marriage, a seat of raw hide was provided for the bride and groom by killing a red bullock at the spur of the moment and that its flesh was served to the groom's party (see 'Sacred Books of the East', edited by F. Max Muller, Vol. XXIX & XXX Gṛhya-Sūtras Parts I & II). Besides the gṛhya-sūtras, rites of the marriage ceremony are not detailed anywhere. We are at a loss to know whence Mukandi Lal has found out that in ancient India cow-slaughter was considered auspicious at a marriage ceremony and the bride and groom had to sit on a raw skin of a red bull before the altar, and that the skin had to be of a red bull which had been sacrificed on the occasion of the marriage ceremony to feed to the guests.

From the foregoing discussion it is clear that there was no on-the-spot slaughter even if the bride had to sit on a bullock-hide

to consummate certain rites after reaching the house of her in-laws after the marriage ceremonies.

The meanings of the word *rohita* (रोहित) in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary are as follows :

(i) a red deer ;

(ii) a red mare ;

(iii) a red or chestnut horse.

So the meaning of रोहिते चर्मणि can also mean the hide of a red deer, red mare or a red horse.

The Meaning of Anaḍuh and Gocarma

According to the texts of Baudhāyana, Pāraskara and Bhāradvāja gṛhya-sūtras given above, where आनडुहे रोहिते चर्मनि उपवेशयति occurs, it is followed by इह गावो निषीदन्तु, इह अश्वाः, इह पुरुषाः which means 'may the cows (oxen) sit here, here the horses, here men'. In Sanskrit the word *gau* also connotes a bullock. It can mean that on the return of the marriage party the bullocks yoked to the chariots may also sit, i.e. remain there, there also the horses, there the people, i.e. the groom's party. How can the sitting area of the hide of a bullock or deer accommodate so many bullocks, horses and men ? To make the sentence इह गावो निषीदन्तु, इह अश्वाः, इह पुरुषाः significant, what can be the intent of the Pāraskara-gṛhya-sūtra अनुगुप्त आगारे आनडुहे रोहिते चर्मणि उपवेशयति ? This ought to be well-considered. Its correct interpretation has been given by Pt. Dinanath Śastri Sāraswat in his Sanātan-Dharmālok, Vol. 6, pages 436-440 whose resume is given below :—

1. According to the Ranti-kośa, the word *anaḍuh* (अनडुह्) signifies the main residence or the gaiety room in the marriage pavilion. The etymology of the word *anaḍuh* (अनडुह्) is अनो वहति—इति अनड्वान्. So the meaning of *anaḍuh* (अनडुह्) given by the Ranti-kośa is correct as being the main residence which bears the chariot in the form of husband and wife.

The Vācaspatya lexicon says अनडुह् आसन्नदेशादौ which means that the word *anaḍuh* (अनडुह्) is used to connote 'an adjacent place' etc. This refers to the gaiety room near the marriage pavilion, where it is appropriate to seat the bride, or the groom and the bride together.

2. रोहिते चर्मणि can also mean 'red hide' and also 'the hide of a red deer, or red horse or mare'. A deer-skin seat has been in vogue for ceremonial sitting. Thus the meaning of the sentence अनुगुप्ते आगारे आनडुहे रोहिते चर्मणि उपवेशयति in Pāraskara gṛhya-sūtra 1.8.10 according to the two preceding interpretations will be : (उपवेशयति) he seats (her) (रोहिते) on deer-hide (अनुगुप्ते) in a covered (आगारे) building (आनडुहे) in the gaiety room near the marriage pavilion.

3. The hide of a bullock is also termed *go-carma* (गोचर्म 'bovine hide'). Let us now consider the various meanings of *go-carma* (गोचर्म). The technical senses of *go-carma* are as follows :

(a) In the Mitākṣarā commentary of the Yājñavalkya-smṛti :—

दशहस्तेन दण्डेन त्रिंशद्-दण्डनिवर्त्तनम् । दश तान्येव गोचर्म

i.e. 'ten hands make a rod (दण्ड), 30 rods a *nivartana* (निवर्त्तन). A land area of ten such *nivartanas* is termed a *gocarma* (गोचर्म).

The meaning of *nivartana* in Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, page 560, column 1 is as follows :

"a measure of land 20 rods or 200 cubits or 40,000 square *hastas*".

The counterpart of the English word 'rod' in Sanskrit is daṇḍa (दण्ड). The English word 'cubit' is defined in an English dictionary as the measure from the elbow to the end of the middle finger which is 18 to 22 inches. An English dictionary defines the length of 'rod' as 5.1/2 yards or 16.1/2 feet, which is approximately ten hands. In the Yājñavalkya-smṛti too a 'rod' (daṇḍa) has been reckoned as 'ten

hands' which tallies with the English dictionary. According to the Yājñavalkya-smṛti a *nivartana* is 30 rods long × 30 rods wide area of land, i.e. 300 hands × 300 hands = 90,000 sq. hands. But, according to the Sanskrit English Dictionary of Monier-Williams, a *nivartana* is 20 rods or 200 hands, i.e. 200 hands long × 200 hands wide = 40,000 square hands.

(b) Gṛhya-saṁgraha 1.39 :

ऋषभैकशतं यत्र गवां तिष्ठति संवृतम् ।
बालवत्स-प्रसूतानां गोचर्म इति संविदुः ॥

that is, an area in which 100 bulls and cows can sit with their calves, that is termed *gocarma* (गोचर्म).

The Candra-kānta-bhāṣya comments on the above :—

गवां शतं वृषश्चैको यत्र तिष्ठेदयन्त्रितः ।
एतद् गोचर्ममात्रं तु प्राहुर्वेदविदो जनाः ॥

that is, where a 100 cows and bullocks can sit without restrictive restrains, that land-area is termed *gocarma* (गोचर्म) by those conversant with the Vedas.

(c) The lexicon Padmacandra-kośa defines it on page 136 as a measurement of land 100 yards long and about 3 yards wide.

(d) It is stated in the 9th stanza of the Bṛhaspati-smṛti :

सवृषं गोसहस्रं तु यत्र तिष्ठत्यतन्द्रितम् ।
बालवत्सप्रसूतानां तद् गोचर्म इति स्मृतम् ॥

i.e. where a 1000 cows and bulls can sit comfortably with their calves, that measure of land is termed a *gocarma* (गोचर्म).

The measurements of *gocarma* given in the Sanskrit English Dictionary of Monier-Williams on page 364, column 2 are as follows :—

(i) A particular measure of surface —a place large enough for the range of 100 cows, one bull and their calves : Gṛhya-sûtras ;	It tallies with the definition given above in (b)
(ii) or a place 10 times as large : Parāśara-smṛti ;	it agrees with the definition in (d).
(iii) a place 300 feet long by 10 feet broad : Wilson ;	it corresponds to the definition in (c).
(iv) or a place 30 Daṇḍas long by 1 Daṇḍa and 7 Hastas broad. Bṛhasp (Mahābhārata xiii, 3121 Sch.).	its style partly tallies with the definition given above in (a), but its area measurements are different.

Thus, *gocarma* (गोचर्म) means a land area where, according to the Gṛhya-saṁgraha, a 100 cows and bulls can sit along with their calves, or according to the Bṛhaspati-smṛti where a 1000 cows and bulls can be accommodated along with their calves. These meanings are appropriate to the context, because where चर्मणि उपवेशयति is prescribed, there it is also enjoined that इह गावो निषीदन्तु, इह अश्वाः, इह पुरुषाः i.e. 'may the cows sit here, here the horses and here men'. If we take the connotation of an animal-hide, then how can a hide accommodate all the numerous chariot-bullocks, horses and men assembled for the marriage ceremony ? The aforesaid technical meaning alone is appropriate to the context as it refers to a measure of land which can be occupied by cows and others. So sometimes a meaning based on the etymology alone becomes irrelevant and absurd ; only a signification arrived at after due consideration of the context can be faultless. Thus, it will mean :—at the groom's house, near the marriage pavilion, there should be an area of land which is sufficient to accommodate all the bullocks yoked to chariots, riding horses, and all the people who have arrived for the grand occasion, and where there is a seat of red deer-hide for the bride in the illuminated gaiety room.

In his article, Mukandi Lal opines that at a royal consecration the king had to sit on a fresh and raw skin of a red bull. Just as the

technical meaning of *gocarma* (गोचर्म) alone is relevant in a marriage ceremony, likewise the same meaning is appropriate to the ceremony of a royal consecration, because during a coronation too, there is a multitudinous crowd as at a marriage.

Hide Seat in a Royal Consecration

It has not been possible to trace a text which details the rites that are performed when a king ascends the throne. In the consecration, during a *rajasūya yajña*, a seat of bullock-hide is referred to here and there, but there is no reference that a fresh and raw hide should be obtained by slaying the animal then and there. Now we will consider all the descriptions that we have found.

Johannes Cornelis Heesterman has written a book "The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration', wherein it is said on page 106, chapter 13, paragraph 1 :

"The unction will be administered to the King while standing up a tiger skin."

(At *Mahābhiṣeka*, described by Kauśika Sūtra, likewise a tiger skin is used (17, 13). At the *Laghvabhiṣeka*, however, a bull's hide is used (17,3).)

Besides the tiger skin, Āpastamba-śrautasūtra and Vārāha-śrautasūtra prescribe also a throne of *Khadira* or *Udumbara* on which the tiger skin is to be fastened. The other authorities do not use a throne at the unction. The actual enthronement takes place later, after the chariot drive."

According to Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, *Khadira* (खदिर) means :

Acacia Catechu (having very hard wood, the resin of which is used in medicine called Catechu, Khayar, Terra japonica), page 336, column 3.

and *Udumbara* (उदुम्बर) means :

The tree Ficus Glomerata. page 196, column 3 :

In the above cited texts, there is not even a hint that tiger-skin or bullock-hide was obtained by slaying them then and there, and that it was a raw hide. It may be possible that a new (unused) skin-seat was necessary for the royal coronation. Consecrations are not of daily occurence ; they take place once in an age, for which a new skin which has never been used for any purpose can be preserved, and such an un-used new skin can be used for the coronation ceremony. A new skin does not mean a raw skin obtained by slaying the animal then and there. A skin which has never been used for any purpose and which has been kept in a store-house, is a new skin. Whichever śrauta-sūtra could be found and wherever a hide-seat is referred to, all such passages are cited below in original for Sanskrit-knowing readers, so that it may become clear that a new hide-seat does not mean a raw skin which has been obtained by slaying the animal at that very moment :—

1. Āpastamba-śrauta 18.15.5. :—

अग्रेण प्रशास्तुर्धिष्णियं खादिरीमौदुम्बरीं वासन्दीं प्रतिष्ठाप्य सोमस्य त्विषिरसीति तस्यां शार्दूलचर्म प्राचीनग्रीवमुत्तरलोमास्तीर्यामृतमसीति तस्मिञ्छतमानं हिरण्यं निधाय दिद्योन्मा पाहीति सौवर्णेन शतमानेन शतक्षरेण शतकृष्णलेन वा यजमानस्य शीर्षन्नधि निधत्ते ।

This description agrees with that given in J. C. Heesterman's 'The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration' as to the type of wood used for the throne.

2. Kātyāyana-sūtra 15.5.1 :—

मरुत्वतीयान्ते पात्राणि पूर्वेण व्याघ्रचर्मास्तृणाति सोमस्य त्विषिरिति

3. Baudhāyana-śrauta-sūtra 12.10 :—

अत्र यजमानायतने शार्दूलचर्म प्राचीनग्रीवमुत्तरलोमोपस्तृणाति ।

4. Vārāha-śrauta-sūtra 3.2.43 :—

सोमस्य त्विषिरसीति व्याघ्रचर्म विवेद्यासन्द्यामास्तृणाति ।

The throne used by Kings is called a *siṁhāsana* (*siṁha* सिंह + *āsana* आसन) which means 'lions seat', or 'a seat made of a lion skin'. In the śrauta-sūtras, the seat of tiger-skin is referred to frequently. In his book 'The Ancient Indian Royal Consecration', J. C. Heesterman says that according to the Kauśika-sūtra a bull's hide was used at the minor consecration (*laghu abhiṣeka*) of a king, which can be correct. We could not have access to the original text of the Kauśika-sūtra. Yet, this much is clear that there is no context which proves that bull-hide was raw and it was obtained from a bull slain instantaneously.



WAS YĀJÑAVALKYA USED TO 'AṀSALA' BEEF ?

Macdonell and Keith have written as follows in the Vedic Index, Part 2, page 145, under the entry '*Māṁsa*' :

"The great sage Yājñavalkya was wont to eat the meat of milch cows and bullocks (*dhenvanaḍuha*) if only it was *amsala* ('firm' or 'tender') (Śatapatha Brāhmana 3.1.2.21)"

Following them blindly, and without going into the crux of the situation, a number of Indians have started humming their tune.

This has been discussed at length by Pandit Dinanath Śastri Sārasvat in his Sanātana-Dharmāloka, Part 6, pages 375-380. Here below follows a gist of his arguments for the benefit of our readers. The original text of Śatapatha-Brāhmana 3.1.2.21 is :

अथ एनं (यजमानं) शालां प्रपादयति। स धेन्वै च अनडुहश्च नाश्नीयात्। धेन्वनडुहौ वै इदं सर्वं बिभृतः। ते देवा अब्रुवन—धेन्वनडुहौ वै इदं सर्वं बिभृतः हन्तः। यदन्येषां वयसां वीर्यम्, तद् धेन्वनडुहयोर्दधाम—इति। यद् अन्येषां वीर्यमासीत्: तद् धेन्वनडुहयोरादधुः। तस्माद् धेनुश्चैव अनड्वांश्च भूयिष्ठं भुङ्क्तः। तद् ह एतत् सर्वाश्यमिव, यो धेन्वडुहयोरश्नीयात्। अन्तगतिरिव तं ह अभिद्रुतमभिजनितो जायायै गर्भं निरवधीदिति पापमकद्—इति पापी कीर्तिः। तस्माद् धेन्वनडुहयोर्नाश्नीयात्। तदु ह उवाच याज्ञवल्क्यः—अश्नाम्येव अहम् अंसलं चेद् भवतीति (३.१.२.२१)

In the Vedas the cow and bull are inviolable. So the question of eating any type of flesh of a cow or bull does not arise. By the principle of the elided *taddhita* (लुप्त तद्धित प्रक्रिया) the word *dhenu* (धेनु) 'cow' means products from the cow, i.e. milk and products from milk, and *anaḍuh* (अनडुह) 'bullock' means the produce from farming done with a bullock.

The context of the Śatapatha is quite different. Sāyaṇa Ācārya has made it clear beyond doubt. After the householder has shaved, bathed and dressed, the *adhvaryu* should lead him to the pavilion. Then the householder should undertake a fast to fulfil his initiation into the *yajña*, and he should not eat even cream and its sweets prepared from cow's milk and food obtained from farming with a bullock. Here the words of Sāyana are :

अस्यापि (शालाप्रवेश-कर्तुः) अशनकालत्वाद् अत्र अशने कंचिद् नियममाह—धेन्वै-धेनोः क्षीरादिकम्, अनडुहः सम्बन्धि कर्षणसाध्यम् इत्यर्थः, तदुभयं नाश्नीयात्।······तद् अश्नतः सर्वाशनं भवति, तस्य च जायाया गर्भ-सम्भवे सति तत् सर्वाशनं तं रेतोरूपेण परिणतं गर्भं हिंस्यात्, तत् पापकीर्तिः स्यात्। तद् उभयोः (धेन्वनडुहयोः) (पायसम्) अन्नं (च) नाश्नीयात्। तत्र याज्ञवल्क्यपक्षमाह—चेत् यस्माद् उभया-(धेन्वनडुहा-)—अशने शरीरम् अंसलं [बलवद्] भवति, तस्माद् तयोरन्नमश्नीयामेव।

Sāyaṇa Ācārya has very clearly translated the two words as 'cows' milk' and 'food procured from farming with a bullock'. There is no mention of any kind of flesh.

Yājñavalkya is not a householder for whom fasting would have been obligatory. He is a chaplain. Fasting in a *yajña* has been prescribed for a householder. So Yājñavalkya in his capacity of a chaplain says :

अश्नामि एव अहं अंसलं चेद् भवति इति।

"I can eat what is *aṁsala* (अंसल)." Alternatively it can also be understood as follows : In the opinion of Yājñavalkya if the performer of a *yajña* totally abstains from eating and as the *yajña* lasts for a long period, he will become emaciated and then he will not be able to perform the *yajña*. To keep up his bodily needs, he will have to eat

something. So Yājñavalkya opines that even as a performer of the yajña I can eat what is *aṁsala* (अंसल). And those householders who follow him can also partake of such victuals.

The antagonists have translated *aṁsala* (अंसल) of the cow and bullock as 'tender flesh', which is not relevant in any manner. The flesh of young cows and bullocks is not tender ; only the flesh of a calf is tender. In this context the calf is neither mentioned in the original passage nor in the statements of the antagonist.

The word *aṁsala* (अंसल) does not mean 'the flesh of an animal'. According to sûtra 5.2.98 of Pānini वत्सांसाभ्यां कामबले it means 'nourishing, strength-bestowing'. In Amarakośa 2.6.44 also it has been translated as मांसलोंऽसलः which means '*aṁsala* is *Māṁsala*'. *Māṁsala* (मांसल) does not apply to flesh (*māṁsa*). *Māṁsala* is used for cream and sweets therefrom, fresh and dry fruits and such other nourishing eatables. It is clear that the word *aṁsala* (अंसल) does not refer to 'animal flesh'. There is no basis or authority for translating *aṁsala* (अंसल) as 'tender flesh'. The correct and genuine meaning of *aṁsala* is 'nourishing' or 'strength-giving'.

So in his capacity as a chaplain or as performer of a *yajña*, Yājñavalkya can partake of milk or milk-products like butter, cream, cream-sweets, or milk-rice pudding (*khīr*), and his followers can also do likewise. And if these be forbidden, they can take strength-giving fruits, both fresh and dry, which are not produced from a cow (*dhenu* धेनु) or from cultivation with a bullock (*anaḍuh* अनडुह्) ; and this will sustain the prohibitive injunction of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa 'तस्माद् धेनु-अनडुहयोः न अश्नीयात्'.

DID AGASTYA SLAY A HUNDRED BULLS ?

Macdonell and Keith have written as follows in the Vedic Index, Part 2, page 145 under the entry '*Māṁsa*'.

"The slaughter of a hundred bulls (*ukṣan*) was credited to one sacrificer, *Agastya*. (Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa 2. 7. 11.1 ; Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa 21. 14.5)."

The English translation of Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa 2.7.11.1 is given below with all the original Sanskrit words in parentheses :

"(अगस्त्यो) Agastya (प्रोक्षत्) performed the *prokṣaṇa* (उक्ष्णः) of the bulls (मरुद्भ्य) for the Maruts, (इन्द्रः) Indra (आदत्त तान्) carried them away. (ते) They the Maruts (अभ्यायन्त) came upon him (वज्रम्) with their *vajras* (उद्यत्य) uplifted. (अगस्त्य श्चैव) Agastya (इन्द्रः च) and Indra (अशमयताम्) pacified (तान्) them (कयाशुभीयेन्) with the Ṛgvedic hymn beginning *kayāśubha*. (शान्तान्) When they were calmed down (उपाह्वयत) he called (तान्) them (यत्). The (कयाशुभीयम्) *kayāśubhīya* hymn (भवति) is (शान्त्यै) for pacifying."

Pañcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa, also known as Tāndya Brāhmaṇa, 21.14.5 is cited below in its English translation with the original Sanskrit words in parentheses :

"(अगस्त्यो वै) *Agastya* verily (प्रोक्षत्) consecrated by sprinkling (उक्ष्णः) the bulls (मरुद्भ्यः) for the Maruts. (अबध्नात्) He bound (तान्) them (इन्द्राय) for Indra. (ते) They (अभ्यपतन्) fell upon (आदाय) him taking up (वज्रम्) the *vajra*. (स) He, Agastya (अपश्यत्) saw (एतत्) this (कयाशुभीयम्) *kayāśubhīya* hymn. (तेन) By it (अशमयत्) he pacified (the anger of the Maruts)."

In the Sanskrit-English Dictionary of Monier-Williams *prokṣaṇa* has been translated as 'consecration by sprinkling'. The context clearly indicates that consecration cannot be for violence. In the Vedas, the bovine family has been declared inviolable in every way. Yet beef-gluttons see cow-slaughter everywhere as a lascivious person sees only a woman whether awake or asleep. When the cow-family is unkillable under all circumstances, then there is no hinderance in accepting consecration by sprinkling for gifting.

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